

Whistleblowing Policy

We are committed to the highest possible standards of quality, honesty, openness and accountability. Our Learners have an important role in achieving this goal.

We want to encourage any colleague who has a serious concern about any aspect of Energy & Utility Skills Group work to come forward and voice any concerns. By knowing about malpractice at an early stage, we stand a good chance of taking the necessary steps to safeguard the interest of our employees and protect the organisation.

Definition

Whistleblowing is where an employee discloses to us the Employer or a relevant authority information that in the reasonable belief of the employee tends to show one of the following:

1. That a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
2. That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with a legal obligation
3. That a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
4. That the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
5. That the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
6. Or that information showing the above is being or is likely to be concealed

Colleagues who whistle-blow are protected in terms of their employment rights; detrimental treatment or dismissal, by the Employment Rights Act 1996, if they make a disclosure in the public interest.

Actions to be taken by Colleagues

If you know, or suspect that some wrongdoing or malpractice is occurring within Energy & Utility Skills Group, you should raise this immediately with your Line Manager. If you don't feel able to tell your Line Manager, you can raise the issue with a member of the Senior Leadership Team or HR, making it clear you are whistleblowing. You can ask for your concerns to be treated in confidence and we will respect these wishes where reasonably possible.

You will not be penalised for informing management of any concerns you may have about potential or actual malpractice, although we may take action under the Disciplinary Procedure against any employee who makes a vexatious claim without foundation.

Possible Situations

Although this list is not exhaustive, examples of situations when it might be appropriate for colleagues to report suspected or actual malpractice include:

- Health and safety breaches including the safeguarding of vulnerable people
- Financial irregularities
- The committing of a criminal offence

Action to be taken by the Line Manager

Upon being informed of potential malpractice or concern, the Line Manager will ensure the matter is taken seriously and will take immediate action to investigate the situation and in more serious cases, inform their Director and HR.

If requested, the Line Manager will take all reasonable steps to protect the anonymity of the whistle-blower. If this is not possible, they should inform the whistle-blower accordingly.

The whistle-blower will be kept updated on any investigation that is taking place, including being informed of the outcome and any actions taken, whilst protecting confidentiality.

Alerting Outside Bodies to a Potential Wrongdoing

You should always talk to a manager within Energy & Utility Skills Group about potential malpractice or wrongdoing. If you are not satisfied with the response, you are entitled to contact a relevant external body to express the concerns. In doing so you should:

- Have reasonable belief that the allegation is based on correct facts
- Not be making any personal gain from the revelations
- Make the disclosure to a relevant body

A relevant body is likely to be a regulatory body such as the Health and Safety Executive or Financial Services Authority.

Contacting the Media

The media is not a relevant external body and colleagues should not contact the media with allegations about the company.

Protection against Detriment

Any colleague who makes a protected disclosure will be protected from any detriment in relation to any allegations that are made.

If a colleague does not follow the above procedure, the protection against detriment will not apply. Disclosing information in an inappropriate way (e.g. by contacting the media) could result in disciplinary action being taken.