

Awarding Organisation Whistleblowing Policy

June 2026



Whistleblowing Policy



Introduction

IOSH is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and integrity and treats any aspects of wrongdoing very seriously.

The term whistleblowing is used when someone discloses information relating to malpractice or wrongdoing. When making such an allegation, it is possible that a person may wish to remain anonymous due to a concern of adverse consequences if their identity is revealed.

Whilst it is always preferable for people to provide us with their name and contact details when raising issues, the whistle blowing policy sets out to provide a safeguard so concerns can be raised, and details treated as confidential.

IOSH has a positive commitment to whistleblowing in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) advice. The PIDA gives legal protection to employees from being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing ("blowing the whistle on") certain serious concerns.

The JCQ guidance is principally for Study Centre staff who may witness malpractice regarding assessments, but it may also be utilised by learners or others who have a concern.

Purpose

IOSH is committed to maintaining the highest standards of quality, honesty and accountability, where individuals can disclose legitimate concerns to prevent harm, or to hold an organisation to account.

This document sets out the way in which concerns of wrongdoing can be reported and should be read in conjunction with the IOSH Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Scope

To enable a whistle-blower to report on a variety of areas involving an IOSH approved Study Centre in relation to safety, safeguarding, bullying, inclusion, fraud, criminal behaviour, and is not limited to malpractice in assessment.

Employment Disputes are out of scope. An employment dispute occurs when a worker has a dispute about his or her own employment position or contract. If you are experiencing such a dispute, you should take this up with your employer or another responsible body. IOSH cannot take action over grievances of this nature.

Roles and responsibilities

This policy covers the following groups:-

- Study Centre staff involved or connected with the delivery and assessment
- Learners registered on IOSH qualifications
- Consultants and third parties affiliated with IOSH AO.

Anyone wishing to raise a concern to the regulator about malpractice or qualification fraud, should follow <https://submit.forms.service.gov.uk/form/6275/report-a-concern-of-malpractice-qualification-fraud-or-wrongdoing-whistleblowing/xhddd3GJ>

The Policy

This policy encourages learners or staff at Study Centres to raise concerns with IOSH if they feel an issue will not be addressed independently by a Study Centre.

Usually, concerns about issues that you see or hear are expected to be resolved easily by following IOSH or Study Centre policies and procedures. However, in some instances those procedures may not appear to be appropriate, for example when:

- there is no relevant procedure
- you have genuine concerns about using a particular procedure
- your concern is about conduct likely to harm the reputation of IOSH

IOSH realises that it can in such instances be difficult to know what to do, especially if you are worried about raising an issue. You may want to keep the concerns to yourself, maybe feeling it is not any of your business, or if it is only a suspicion. IOSH hopes that the assurances given in this policy will encourage you to come forward and raise genuine concerns at an early stage and in the right way.

We will always endeavour to keep a whistle-blower's identity confidential when asked to do so. However, this cannot be guaranteed, and we may need to disclose your identity to:

- the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud)
- the courts (in connection with court proceedings)
- the national regulator responsible for the standards of the qualification(s) concerned.
- another person to whom we are required by law to disclose your identity.

Occasionally, circumstances surrounding a situation/incident may point to the whistle-blower, or it may be obvious via a process of elimination.

How to make a whistleblowing disclosure

To make a disclosure, you will normally need to set out the details in writing containing the following information:

- Full name of informant (this will be for communication purposes only and will be kept as confidential if requested unless, we need to legally disclose it)
- Study Centre Name (if appropriate)
- Qualification title(s)
- The reason(s) for the concern
- Supporting documentation (if appropriate)

Allegations of suspected malpractice or wrongdoing may also be made anonymously (via post or telephone). We will understand if you do not wish to disclose your identity although providing your details can make it easier for us to investigate the matter and protect your position. It also enables us to give you feedback where appropriate.

If you are unsure whether you should raise an issue under this policy, you can talk in complete confidence to the Awarding Organisation Team – 0116 257 3100.

If you decide to raise an issue anonymously, IOSH will investigate it.

Whistleblowing disclosures should be sent to our Head of Awarding Organisation, by email to admin@ioshao.com or by post to:

The Head of Awarding Organisation
Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
The Grange, Highfield Drive,
Wigston,
Leicestershire,
LE18 1NN

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How we will follow up a whistleblowing disclosure

1. We will send you an initial acknowledgement that we have received your disclosure (unless the issue has been raised anonymously)

2. A full investigation will be undertaken.

Note: It may not always be possible to substantiate anonymous disclosures. We will investigate issues which are reported to us anonymously and/or by whistle-blowers, however, we will always try to confirm any disclosures by means of a separate investigation before taking the matter up with whom the disclosure relates.

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

4. In most cases, we will keep you updated as to what action is being taken in response to your disclosure. We will normally send you an update within 28 working days of receiving your disclosure. This may take longer if the issue is particularly complex.

After an initial review of the concern, IOSH may determine that that matter be dealt with in accordance with another policy such as our Malpractice and Maladministration and/or Complaints Policy.

Monitoring & Review

Records of all Whistleblowing incidents and other information will be regularly reviewed by the IOSH Head of Awarding Organisation as Responsible Officer. The findings, together with any identifiable trends and recommendations will be formally reported to, and reviewed, by the IOSH AO Committee.

As a result of the monitoring and review process, changes to the policy or any of the associated processes and procedures will be agreed and implemented accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of our quality assurance requirements and it will be revised as and when necessary and in response to Study Centre and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous allegations.

In addition, this policy may be updated considering operational feedback to ensure IOSH AO arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

Terms, definitions, acronyms and abbreviations

Complaints: an expression of personal dissatisfaction. Examples of complaints that we will normally investigate can be found in the IOSH Complaints Policy.

JCQ - Joint Council for Qualifications

PIDA - Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

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