

UNIVERSITY ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING SOUTH BANK

Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

The University Academy of Engineering South Bank is committed to high standards of openness, probity and accountability. This Whistleblowing Policy and procedure supports this commitment.

This Whistleblowing Policy is about the ways in which concerns about malpractice may properly be raised within the Academy and if necessary outside the Academy.

This Policy should not be used for complaints relating to employees own personal circumstances, such as the way they have been treated at work. Such concerns should be raised under the Grievance Procedure or the Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate.

Aim

All employees have the right to be able to raise a concern about working practices and other areas of concern in the public interest and receive feedback on actions taken. The Academy will seek to engender an ethical and open culture in which establishes safe routes of communication without reprisal, impartial and effective investigative procedures which respect confidentiality. The key principles therefore are to:

- Provide avenues for employees to raise genuine concerns internally as a matter of course and receive feedback on actions taken
- Ensure that matters are dealt with quickly and appropriately and ensure that concerns are taken seriously
- Re-assure employees that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle-blowing in good faith
- Allow employees to take the matter further, if they are dissatisfied with the Board of Governor's response.

Operation

Initially, an employee should normally raise concerns to their line manager or where their line manager is concerned, the Principal. Any issues concerning the Principal should be raised with the Executive Principal.

Ideally, concerns are better raised in writing. The employee should set out the background and history of the concerns, giving names, dates and places where possible, and the reasons why the employee is particularly concerned about the situation. If an employee does not feel able to put the concern in writing, the employee should telephone or meet their line manager or Principal. It is important, however that when the concern is raised, the employee makes it clear that they are raising the issue via the Whistle Blowing procedure.

Although an employee is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for concern.

An initial meeting will be held between their line manager or Principal and the individual raising the concern to establish there is genuine and sufficient grounds for concern and that the concern is appropriately being raised by the Whistle Blowing Policy. Employees may bring a colleague or trade union representative to any meetings under this Policy who must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation. A formal record will be kept of this meeting which the person raising the concern will be asked to sign. The line manager or Principal should positively encourage the employee to do this as a concern expressed anonymously is much less powerful and more difficult to address.

After the initial meeting, the line manager or Principal will determine if an investigation is appropriate and what form it should take. A record will be kept of this meeting and the agreed actions. In the case of any concerns regarding the Principal, the Executive Principal will determine if an investigation is appropriate.

The line manager or Principal will communicate with the employee during the investigative process and will write a response at the end of the process outlining the steps that have been taken and provide advice and guidance on further actions if the outcome is deemed inappropriate.

At all stages the identity of the individual raising the concern will be kept confidential as far as possible.

The line manager, Principal or Executive Principal will explain to the employee if that during the process it is uncovered that the allegations are in any way malicious or vexatious, then disciplinary action may be taken against them.

If the investigation finds the allegations to be unfounded the matter will be considered to be closed unless any new evidence is received.

External disclosures

The aim of this Policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases, employees should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for employees to report their concerns to an external body such as a regulator: it will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. The Academy would strongly encourage an employee to seek advice before reporting a concern externally. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline; they also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern.



Create your future

Their contact details are:

Public Concern at Work (Independent
whistleblowing charity)

Helpline: (020) 7404 6609

E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Website: www.pcaw.co.uk

Executive Head Contact details: Dan Cundy <Dan.Cundy@southbank-utc.co.uk>

If a matter is taken outside the Academy, the employee must take all reasonable steps to ensure that confidential or privileged information is not disclosed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board of Governors and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Whistle Blowing Policy.