

EUSR Whistle-blowers Policy

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to allow employers, registered individuals on Energy & Utility Skills schemes, trainers, providers and assessors to feel comfortable and secure should they want to report a suspected, or actual, wrongdoing on the part of a third party relating to one of our schemes, assessments or quality assurance – it is designed to provide an avenue for doing so.

Whistle-blowing is distinct from complaints, personal grievances, bullying and employment disputes.

What is Whistle-blowing?

Whistle-blowing is the term used when an individual discloses information relating to wrongdoing, malpractice or maladministration, corruption or other illegalities, including the possible covering up of these activities. Examples of disclosures covered by this policy include:

- A criminal offence (such as bribery or fraud)
- A breach of a legal obligation
- A failure to adhere to Energy & Utility Skills' quality assurance requirements
- Malpractice or maladministration relating to the delivery or assessment of a Scheme
- Danger to the health and safety of an individual(s), including the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
- Harassment or discrimination towards an individual
- Damage to the environment
- Attempts to conceal any of the above

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) protects individuals from being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of disclosing ('blowing the whistle on') certain serious concerns that are in the public interest.

Confidentiality

You will be treated with respect and all disclosures will be handled seriously and sensitively with due consideration to all parties involved and to all related legislative requirements.

You should be aware that your identity may be recognised by others due to circumstances of the disclosure, although we will always endeavour to eliminate this risk.

We may have to share information received in the disclosure where we consider it necessary to do so with third parties (such as the police, fraud prevention agencies, the courts or parents). We will base any investigation on the disclosure given at the time; any new information received after an investigation has commenced will be treated as a separate investigation.

How to Make a Disclosure

You can notify us of a whistleblowing disclosure by contacting us as follows:

Email: quality@euskills.co.uk **Phone:** 0121 745 1310

We will need the following information:

- Individual(s) and / or organisation(s) involved in the actual or suspected wrong-doing
- Date(s) of the alleged wrongdoing
- Energy & Utility Skills Scheme name (if relevant)
- Details of the actual or suspected wrongdoing

We encourage disclosures to be put in writing to us as this helps us to ensure that all facts are understood.

We will acknowledge receipt within 2 working days.

There may be occasions where it may not be possible or appropriate for us to investigate - for example if we feel the disclosure falls outside of our remit – and in such instances we will always recommend another course of action.

Due to the varied nature of whistleblowing disclosures, timescales for investigations will vary considerably. We will write to you again within ten working days to inform you how we will be addressing the disclosure and will keep you informed on our progress.

We reserve the right to cease responding to any disclosure if the whistle-blower is, in our opinion, abusive, vexatious or frivolous.

If you would like independent advice about whistleblowing, you can contact your trade union, ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) or the whistleblowing charity 'Public Concern at Work'.

Anonymous Disclosure

We encourage anyone making a disclosure to put their name to any disclosure they make as concerns expressed anonymously can be less credible.

All disclosures will be logged and the decision whether to investigate an anonymous disclosure or not will be made on an individual basis.