



WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Academy is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty, integrity and accountability. As part of this commitment the Academy is aware that public trust in the Academy is essential. It is essential for the Academy to make that trust be based on certainty. The Academy acknowledges that members are often the first to notice and then alert the Academy to any potential concern. Their cooperation and trust in the Academy means it encourages members and others with concerns about any aspect of the Academy to speak to them in confidence and share their concerns. Clearly, there is no need to report concerns unless they are about criminal conduct, financial irregularities or allegations of the public, other staff or the involvement of a child or vulnerable adult. In such cases, members could be contacted.
- A criminal offence (e.g. fraud, corruption etc.) may have or has been committed
- A percentage of public has been or is likely to be injured
- The health or safety of an individual has been or is likely to be endangered
- Public funds are being used in an unauthorised manner
- The environment has been or is likely to be damaged
- The Academy's Reputation and/or Code of Conduct, Conduct Procedures Book, Finance Procedures Rules has been or is being breached by members and/or members of staff
- Abuse of a position, removal of any member or former member or being information relating to any member or former member, e.g. disability, race etc.
- Information relating to any member or former member, e.g. disability, race etc.
- 1.2 You as an Academy member may be contacted about raising such issues or may want to bring the concerns to yourself, perhaps leading the issue of your business or that of a child or dependent. You may feel that raising the issue would be illegal or otherwise illegal or in the regulations. You may also feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. You may decide to say something, but for fear you have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way you are not sure what to do next.
- 1.3 The Academy has introduced this revised Whistle Blowing Policy to enable you to raise your concerns about such irregularities as an early and safe to the right way. We would prefer that you raised the matter when it is just a concern rather than wait for proof. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to encourage and enable you, as a member, to raise concerns without the Academy being able to identify you as a problem or simply reporting it outside. It should be used in conjunction with the Code of Conduct unless stated otherwise.

1.4 If something is troubling you, which you think are should know about, or look into, please use this policy. Don't guess the concern. If, however, you have a language barrier, you may prefer to speak to a representative of the Health, Safety and Environment Department - who'll get you in touch with the Health, Safety and Environment Department of the University of Cambridge. The Health, Safety and Environment Department is generally to ensure where the interests of others or of the organization itself are at risk.

2. Aims

- 2.1 This policy aims to
- encourage workers to feel confident in raising serious concerns;
 - reassure workers that, when they raise any concerns in good faith and reasonably believe them to be true, i.e. "whistleblowers", they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation;
 - provide avenues for a worker to raise concerns and receive feedback on any such issues;
 - ensure that workers get a response to the concerns they have raised from the Academy and, if the Academy cannot help, how they may raise the matter further if they are dissatisfied with the response.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy may be used by all workers in the Academy. This includes permanent and temporary employees of the Academy, agency workers, home workers and Academy employees associated to a contract.

3.2 It is not intended that this policy, and its associated procedures, be used to raise concerns which fall within the scope of other Academy procedures, where more appropriate procedures are available.

4. Subsequent

4.1 The Academy recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, and that because of the fear of negative consequences imposed by the management, the Academy will do its utmost to ensure that all workers who raise concerns in good faith, and in accordance with this policy, are not made any detriment in connection with their employment. Therefore, providing you are acting in good faith, it does not matter if you are mistaken.

4.2 However, this does not mean that, if you are already the subject of disciplinary or misconduct procedures, that those procedures will be halted as a result of your disclosure.

Confidentiality

- 4.3 The Academy will do its best to protect your identity when you make a concern and do not want your name to be disclosed. If you ask us to protect your identity by keeping your concerns, we will try to do so. If without your consent or advice referred to in Article 4.3 of the Statutes. If the situation shows there is no way to resolve the concern without revealing your identity to us, a statement by you may be required as part of the evidence we will discuss with you privately and in the next section.

Anonymous Allegations

- 4.4 The policy strongly encourages you to put your name to your allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously will be much more difficult for us to look into or protect your position or to give you feedback. Concerns raised anonymously are much less powerful and less likely to be effective, but they will be considered if the direction of the Academy.

- 4.5 If forwarding disclosure, the factors to be taken into account would include:
 - the seriousness of the issues raised;
 - the reliability and credibility of the sources; and
 - the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Limit of Institutional Allegations

- 4.6 If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, we cannot and do not intend to take any action. However, you make disclosure of sensitive allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

5. How to Raise a Concern within the Academy

- 5.1 As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your line manager or their deputy. This depends, however, on the circumstances and severity of the concern. If you believe that this is thought to be included in the Statutes. For example, if your concern is about management it is included in the Statutes. For example, if your concern is about the safety of the Academy, you should approach a member of the Trust in the first instance.

Please say if you want to raise the matter in confidence or the person you contact cannot take appropriate action.

- 5.2 Concerns are better raised in writing. You are invited to set out the background and details of the concerns, giving names, dates and details where possible, and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. If you do not feel able to put your concerns in writing, you can telephone or meet the appropriate person.
- 5.3 The writer you express the concern, the reader it is to take action. You may also wish to involve your Trade Union representative at the stage.

- 5.4 Although you are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, you will need to co-operate to the extent considered for there are sufficient grounds for your concern.
- 5.5 Advice and guidance on how matters of concern may be pursued can be obtained from the Academy's (in its Academy Practice Guidelines).
- 5.6 You may also wish your trade union or professional association to have a matter on your behalf.
6. **How the Academy will respond**
- 6.1 The action taken by the Academy will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters considered are:
- be investigated internally;
 - be referred to the Police;
 - be referred to the Criminal Justice.
- 6.2 In order to protect individuals and the Academy, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is warranted and, if so, what form it should take. Certain circumstances which fall within the scope of further provisions (for example, Child Protection) will normally be referred for consideration under those provisions.
- 6.3 Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.
- 6.4 Within ten working days of a concern being received, the Academy will write to you:
- acknowledging that the concern has been received;
 - outlining, in broad terms, how it proposes to deal with the matter;
 - giving, where possible, an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response;
 - telling you whether any related enquiries have been made; and
 - telling you whether further investigations will take place, and if so, why not.
- 6.5 The nature of contact between the officers conducting the matter and you will depend on the nature of the matter raised, the potential disciplinary involved and the scope of the subsequent process. If necessary, further information will be sought from you.
- 6.6 When any meeting is arranged, you have the right if you so wish, to be accompanied by a Trade Union colleague, a non-employee, a professional association representative or a friend who is not involved in the area of work to which the concern relates.
- 6.7 The Academy will take steps to minimise any difficulties, which you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in connection with disciplinary proceedings, the Academy will advise you about the procedures.

- 6.8 The Academy requests that you, need to be assured that the matter has been properly referred and that, where possible, the Academy will provide information on the request.
- 7 Independent Advice**
- 7.1 If you are unsure whether to use the Policy or you want independent advice at any time, you may contact:
- Familyline, your union;
 - the Independent Charity Public Concern at Work on 020 7464 6820. Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice at any stage about how to raise a concern about potential misconduct at work.
- 8 How the matter can be taken further**
- 8.1 This policy is intended to provide you with the means to raise concerns within the Academy and to give you the reassurance you need to make such matters seriously. The Academy makes you and its staff feel safe and if you have a right to take the matter outside the Academy, the following are possible consequences:
- the Academy's General Statutes;
 - the Police;
 - the Local Government Ombudsman (0445 602 1982);
 - the Information Commissioner (01223 266 700);
 - Anti-Corruption (0202 444 6246);
 - SAGE (0) 203 600 000 (in the UK) 021 222 2222.
- The list above is not exhaustive and other possible parties to contact may be:
- your local Council member (if you live in the area of the Academy);
 - your trade union or other representative organisation;
 - your employer.
- We would advise you raised a matter with the appropriate regulator or outside body than not at all. You may raise a concern with any of the above provided that:
- a) you make the disclosure in good faith;
 - b) you reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, is substantially true;
 - c) you do not make the disclosure for the purposes of personal gain.
- Again appropriate legal advice should be sought prior to raising a matter externally.
- 8.2 If you do take the matter outside the Academy, you need to ensure that you do not disclose confidential information or that disclosure would be prejudicial.

9 **The Responsible Officer**

6.1 The Academy's Solicitor has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the Financial Services Policy. The Solicitor will maintain a complete register of the number and nature of the contracts issued and the customer (but in a form which does not compromise any confidentiality) and will report on compliance to the Director and Executive when appropriate.

6.2 The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the Policy remains up to date and to ensure it remains effective.