

The ASA Awarding Body Whistle Blowing Policy

Introduction

Swim England Qualifications (SEQ) wishes to conduct all business with integrity at all times. SEQ actively encourages the reporting of any working practices that are dangerous, illegal, unethical or fraudulent and to protect those reporting these.

SEQ understands that at times things go wrong and mistakes can be made. A culture of reporting and transparency in such instances is encouraged so that immediate action can be taken to remedy any mistakes or wrong doing and that policies, procedures and practices can be amended to ensure future appropriateness.

What is Whistle Blowing?

A whistle blower is someone who reports suspected wrong doing at work. This is officially called 'making a disclosure in the public interest'. Wrong doing may include:

- putting someone's health and safety is in danger
- damaging the environment
- a criminal offence
- the organisation is not obeying the law
- the organisation is not meeting regulatory requirements set by Ofqual in the General Conditions of Recognition.
- covering up wrongdoing.
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A whistle blower is protected by the law and will not be treated detrimentally or dismissed as long as the reporting is in good faith, not malicious or for personal gain. If reporting is malicious or for personal gain there is no protection by law.

A whistle blower is not expected to investigate any potential wrong doing but to refer it for the SEQ to investigate further.

Reporting of Whistle Blowing

Anyone associated with the SEQ can report any potential wrong doing at any time. This includes internal staff, associates, anyone associated with any approved centres, learners, tutors and verifiers.

To report a potential wrong doing please complete the online form on www.swimenglandqualifications.com

1. All reports of potential wrong doing will be treated seriously.
2. The report will be promptly and fairly investigated.
3. Any wrong doing that involves criminal activity will be reported to the police.

4. The whistle blower may be interviewed and asked to provide a written witness statement setting out the nature and details of the report and the basis for it. Whistleblowers will be asked to disclose as much supporting evidence as possible to ensure timely and effective investigation.
5. Whistle blowing can be anonymous. SEQ will endeavor to process this in the same way as if the identity of the whistle blower is known however it may not always be possible to investigate or substantiate anonymous disclosures as fully.
6. The length and scope of the investigation will depend on the subject matter of the report. A specific time frame is not stated given the potential diversity of reports
7. Once the investigation has been completed, you will be informed in writing of the outcome, together with our conclusions and decision in a timely manner. However, the need for confidentiality may mean you are not given specific details of the investigation or actions taken.
8. SEQ may on completion of the investigation report the matter to an appropriate external agencies including Ofqual.
9. If, on conclusion of the above stages, that appropriate action has still not been taken, you may then report the matter to the proper authority in good faith. The Act sets out a number of prescribed external bodies or persons to which qualifying disclosures may be made. These include HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), The Financial Services Authority (FSA), Office of Fair Trading (OFT), Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and the Environment Agency.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigatory process to the extent that this is practical and appropriate in the circumstances. However, in order to effectively investigate a disclosure, we must be able to determine the scope of the investigation and the individuals who should be informed of or interviewed about the disclosure. If it becomes necessary to disclose your identity, we will make efforts to inform you that your identity is likely to be disclosed. In order not to jeopardise the investigation, you are also expected to keep the fact that you have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved confidential.

The next policy review will take place in May 2019