

1. SCOPE

'Whistleblowing' is the term commonly used to describe public disclosure of suspected wrongdoing within an organisation. Whistleblowing may be carried out by employee or ex-employee learner, and those who work on behalf of The Enterprise Centre Limited. The Enterprise Centre Limited expects that individuals will act with good will towards The Enterprise Centre Limited and use the whistleblowing policy in good faith.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to all employees, ex-employee learner, and those who work on behalf of The Enterprise Centre Limited. It aims to ensure that all individuals can feel able to raise, without fear of reprisal, concerns they may have suspected wrongdoing within The Enterprise Centre Limited, such as fraud, malpractice, serious risks to health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice.

3. PRINCIPLES

- The Enterprise Centre Limited aims to create and sustain an ethos of openness and trust in its working environment
- An individual who has a concern has the right to raise this with an appropriate person within the organisation and, if he or she so wishes, in the presence of a chosen colleague, family member or trade union representative
- All investigations into any concern raised by an individual will be conducted impartially, fairly, and in good faith
- If an individual raises a concern in good faith but it is not confirmed by investigation, no action will be taken against him/her. If, however, an individual raises a concern which he/she knows to be unjustified, then disciplinary action may be taken against him/her
- The Enterprise Centre Limited will ensure that an individual who raises a concern in good faith will be protected against any consequent harassment or victimisation
- Any concern raised by an individual which relates to suspected fraud will be reported to The Enterprise Centre Limited who will advise on whether or not there is a case for investigating fraudulent practice.
- Concerns raised anonymously will be given proper consideration but can be more difficult to investigate than those brought forward by a named person
- It is expected that individuals who believe they have a legitimate concern about any aspect of the organisation will raise this internally rather than outside of The Enterprise Centre Limited

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Raising a concern

- All concerns must be raised with The Enterprise Centre Limited if an individual has a concern about action or practice within The Enterprise Centre Limited which he/she believes is:
 - Illegal
 - In serious contravention of health and safety or environmental legislation
 - Fraudulent
 - Forcing him/her to act in a way which is against his/her conscience
 - Maladministration or misuse of public funds
- The individual may be accompanied by a colleague, family member, or trade union representative
- Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing
- Concerns raised will be treated confidentially, seriously and sensitively
- Requests for anonymity will normally be met but there may be circumstances, for example as part of a prosecution or disciplinary investigation, where an individual may be asked to come forward as a witness

Whistle blowing policy

- In accordance with The Enterprise Centre Limited fraud policy, The Enterprise Centre Limited has primary responsibility for the investigation of all suspected financial irregularities.

4.2 Dealing with a concern

- It may be possible to deal satisfactorily with a concern raised without resorting to further investigation.
- If urgent action is required to deal with a concern, this may be, in certain circumstances, be carried out before any investigation is completed.
- Within 10 working days of being informed of a concern, The Enterprise Centre Limited will write to the individual who has raised it and will inform him/her of what action will be taken and the timescale for this. If it becomes evident that the proposed action cannot be completed within the specified timescale, The Enterprise Centre Limited will determine a revised timescale and inform the employee of this.
- If an investigation into the individual concern is authorised, the person responsible for carrying it out will inform the employee of the investigation's progress and outcomes, subject to any legal constraints.
- Should an individual have a concern which relates specifically to the conduct and practice of The Enterprise Centre Limited, the individual should raise this directly The Enterprise Centre Limited.

4.3 External contacts

While The Enterprise Centre Limited hopes that individuals will raise any concerns they may have with The Enterprise Centre Limited in the first instance, it is recognised that there may be circumstances where individuals may wish to seek independent advice. The following sources of support are possible contact points:

- Trade Union
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Relevant professional body or regulatory organisation
- The police

Individuals, who raise a concern externally rather than internally, may not necessarily receive the same support from management as an individual who raises a concern internally. In certain circumstances, an employee who raises an unjustified concern externally may lose protection from dismissal.

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