



## Whistleblowing Policy

<b>POLICY DETAILS</b>	
Policy Category:	Governance
Version Number:	V2
Approving Authority:	Results Executive Team
Approval Date	14 November 2025
Date Reviewed:	6 November 2025
Date of next review:	14 November 2026
Author:	Quality Assurance Manager
Owner (if different from above):	Principal
Version History:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Updated and added policy details at the beginning. Added related policies and procedures</li><li>2. Corrected minor typos</li><li>3. Corrected numbering in section 6</li><li>4. Added page numbers</li></ol>
Related Policies / Procedures	Safeguarding Policy Prevent Policy Health and Safety Policy Disciplinary Policy Grievance Policy Complaints Policy Code of Ethics Staff Academic Malpractice and Maladministration Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Effective Date:	14 November 2025

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Results Consortium (the College) is committed to operating in an ethical and principled way. The aim of this policy is to provide workers with a means for raising genuine concerns of suspected bribery, breaches of the law and other wrongdoings.

1.2 The College encourages workers to raise genuine concerns about suspected wrongdoing at the earliest practicable stage. Policy and procedure are intended to provide safeguards to enable members of staff to raise concerns about malpractice in connection with the College.

1.3 This policy also aims to encourage workers to raise genuine concerns through internal College procedures without fear of adverse repercussions being taken against them. Whistleblowing law is in the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) and the law allows workers to raise such concerns externally. This policy informs workers how they can do so.

1.4 This policy seeks to balance the need to allow a culture of openness against the need to protect other workers against vexatious allegations or allegations which are not well-founded.

1.5 The principles of openness and accountability which underpin legislation protecting Whistleblowers are reflected in this policy and procedure. The Policy has been developed in accordance and under the guidance of the:

- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)
- Employment Rights Act (1996)
- Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (2013)
- Association of Colleges' Whistleblowing Guidance for Colleges (2013)

1.6 Students at the College are also encouraged to raise genuine concerns about suspected wrongdoing by making a complaint following the same procedure.

1.7 Having whistleblowing policies and procedures in place means that an intervention by the Office for Students, particularly in relation to a failure to comply with the requirements for condition F3, is less likely.

## **2. Definition**

2.1 There is no single legal definition of the term 'whistleblowing.' The Association of Colleges (AoC) describes whistleblowing as the action of an individual exposing evidence of wrongdoing by employers or third parties in the context of the workplace.

## **3. Scope**

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the College, including:

- Apprentices
- Workers, which includes casual workers
- Home-based casual workers
- Employees of subcontractors
- Agency or freelance workers engaged by the College
- Interns or volunteers

3.2 Workers might be unsure whether it is appropriate to raise their concern under this policy, or whether it is a personal grievance to raise under the College's grievance procedure. Any worker in this situation is encouraged to approach HR in confidence for advice.

#### **4. Protected Disclosure**

4.1 The law protects workers who, out of a sense of public duty, want to reveal suspected wrongdoing or malpractice.

4.2 The law allows workers to raise what it defines as a 'protected disclosure'. To be a protected disclosure, it must relate to a specific matter (See Section 5 below) and the disclosure must also be made in an appropriate way (See Section 6). A 'protected disclosure' must, in the reasonable belief of the worker making it, also be made in the public interest. A protected disclosure must consist of information and facts, not merely be allegations of suspected malpractice.

#### **5. Specific Matter**

5.1 If, in the course of employment, a worker becomes aware of information which they reasonably believe tends to show one or more of the following, they must use this policy and procedure:

- That a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed.
- That an individual has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation, regulatory frameworks or external requirements, to which they are subject.
- That a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur.
- That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be, endangered.
- That the environment, has been, is being, or is likely to be, damaged.
- That information tending to show any of the above, is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed.

#### **6. Procedure for making a disclosure**

6.1 Information which a worker reasonably believes shows one or more of the situations given in Section 5 should promptly be disclosed to the Data Protection Officer so that any appropriate action can be taken.

6.2 Disclosures can be made via email, verbally or in the form of a letter. If a verbal disclosure is made the Data Protection Officer reserves the right to confidentially record the disclosure to enable an investigation to take place. This must be reported where there are legislative implications.

6.3 If the matter directly concerns the Data Protection Officer, then the disclosure should be made to the CEO. If the matter directly concerns both these individuals, then the Board of Governors should be approached to identify a designated independent individual to investigate.

6.4 Workers are encouraged to identify themselves when making a disclosure. If an anonymous disclosure is made, the College will not be able to notify the individual making the disclosure of the outcome of action taken by the College because their identity will be unknown. Anonymity also means that the College will have difficulty in investigating such a concern.

6.5 The College reserves the right to determine whether to apply this procedure in respect of an anonymised disclosure in light of the following considerations:

- The seriousness of the issues raised in the disclosure
- The credibility of the concern
- How likely it is that the concern can be confirmed from attributable sources

6.6 For further guidance in relation to this policy and procedure, or concerning the use of the disclosure procedure generally, workers should speak in confidence to the Data Protection Officer.

6.7 Step-by-step procedures are summarised in the appendix.

## **7. Procedure for investigation of a disclosure**

7.1 When a worker makes a disclosure (point 6.2), the College will acknowledge its receipt in writing within 5 working days.

7.2 If the College considers that the disclosure does not have sufficient merit to warrant further action, the worker making the disclosure will be notified in writing of the reasons for the College's decision and advised that no further action will be taken by the College under this policy. Considerations to be taken into account when making this determination may include the following:

- If the College is satisfied that a worker does not have a reasonable belief that suspected malpractice is occurring; or
- If the matter is already the subject of legal proceedings or appropriate action by an external body; or
- If the matter is already subject to another, appropriate College procedure.

7.3 When a worker makes a disclosure which has sufficient substance or merit warranting further action, the College will take action it deems appropriate (including action under any other applicable College policy or procedure). Possible actions could include:

- I. internal investigation
- II. referral to the College's auditors
- III. referral to relevant external bodies such as, but not limited to, the Police, Awarding Organisations, Office for Students, Student Loans Company, Channel, Health and Safety Executive, the Information Commissioner's Office, Joint Council for Qualifications, Ofqual, Quality Assurance Agency, Action Fraud Reporting Centre, HMRC, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Greater London Authority, university partners.
- IV. training/CPD to raise awareness of specific matters and to action the recommendations of the investigation.
- V. disciplinary action against persons found to be responsible for wrongdoing.

7.4 If appropriate, any internal investigation would be conducted by the Data Protection Officer (unless s/he is directly involved in the disclosure and in this instance the CEO or individual appointed by the Board of Governors would act as Investigation Manager), or by an external investigator appointed by the College as appropriate.

7.5 Any recommendations for further action made by the College will be addressed to the individual appointed by the Board of Governors. The recipient will take all steps within their power to ensure the recommendations are implemented unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

7.6 The worker making the disclosure will be notified of the outcome of any action taken by the College under this policy and procedure within a reasonable period of time and an update will be provided every 15 days.

7.7 This procedure encourages timely investigation of disclosures, although the College acknowledges that timescales need to be flexible to ensure thorough investigation of different types of concerns. For this reason, a final response will usually be within 10 working days of receipt of the disclosure with the timescale for implementation indicated where possible.

7.8 All communications with the worker making the disclosure should be in writing and sent to the worker's home address rather than through the College's internal mail. If investigations into the concern are prolonged, the College should keep the worker concerned updated every 15 days as to the progress of the investigation and an estimated timeframe for its conclusion.

7.9 All investigation outcomes will be reported to the Board of Governors.

7.10 Right of Appeal - If the worker is not satisfied that their concern has been appropriately addressed, they can appeal against the outcome by raising the issue with the Governing Body within 10 working days. The Chair of the Governors will make a final decision on action to be taken and notify the worker making the disclosure.

7.11 Step-by-step procedures are outlined in the appendix.

## **8. Safeguards for workers making a disclosure**

8.1 A worker making a disclosure under this procedure can expect their matter to be treated confidentially by the College and, where applicable, their name will not be disclosed to anyone implicated in the suspected wrongdoing, without their prior approval.

8.2 The College will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any report of recommendations, or other relevant documentation, produced by the College does not identify the worker making the disclosure without their written consent, or unless the College is legally obliged to do so, or for the purposes of seeking legal advice.

8.3 A worker making a disclosure may want to confidentially request support from HR. Such a request would be made in confidence.

8.4 No formal disciplinary action will be taken against a worker on the grounds of making a disclosure under this policy. This does not prevent the College from bringing disciplinary action against a worker where the College has grounds to believe that a

disclosure was made maliciously or vexatiously, or where a disclosure is made outside the College without reasonable grounds.

8.5 A worker will not suffer dismissal or any detrimental action or omission of any type (including informal pressure or any form of victimisation) by the College for making a disclosure in accordance with this policy. Equally, where a worker is threatened, bullied, pressurised or victimised by a colleague for making a disclosure, disciplinary action will be taken by the College against the colleague in question.

8.6 The College will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of workers who make disclosures. If, at any stage of this procedure, a worker feels that they are being subject to informal pressures, bullying or harassment due to making a disclosure, they should raise this matter, in writing, to HR.

## **9. Disclosure to external bodies**

9.1 This policy allows workers to raise disclosures internally within the College. A worker has the right to make a disclosure outside of the College where there are reasonable grounds to do so and in accordance with the law. However, it is expected that internal procedures will be exhausted before doing so.

9.2 Workers may make a disclosure to an appropriate external body prescribed by the law. The list of 'prescribed' organisations and bodies can be found in information on the GOV.UK website.

9.3 Workers can also make disclosures on a confidential basis to a practising solicitor or barrister, or to their MP.

9.4 If a worker seeks advice outside of the College, they must be careful not to breach any confidentiality obligations or damage the College's reputation when seeking external advice.

## **10. Accountability**

10.1 The College will keep a record of all concerns raised under this policy (including cases where the College deems that there is no case to answer and therefore that no action should be taken) and will report to the Board of Governors on an annual basis as appropriate.

10.2 Records must be kept for 7 years.

## **11. Further assistance for workers**

Workers can contact the charity Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) for confidential advice on whistleblowing issues. Contact details are as follows:

The Green House  
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road London  
E2 9DA

Whistleblowing Advice Line: 020 3117 2520

Online contact form: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/>

## Appendix 1: Summary of whistleblowing procedures

