

Whistle Blowing Policy

Introduction

The words whistle blowing in this policy refers to the disclosure internally or externally by staff, as well as illegal acts or omissions at work.

Policy Statement

Debut is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of service and the highest possible ethical standards in public life and in all of its practices. To achieve its ends, it encourages freedom of speech. It also encourages staff to use internal mechanisms for reporting any malpractice or illegal acts or omissions by its employees or ex-employees.

Scope of Policy

This policy is designed to enable employees of Debut to raise concerns internally and at a high level and to disclose information which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety. This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and may at least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to the invocation of other procedures, e.g., disciplinary. These concerns could include:

- Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Dangers to health and safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Any behaviour that would be considered a risk under the Government's Prevent Strategy

Responsibility and Authority

The organisation has ultimate responsibility for learner protection and will ensure that the arrangements for safeguarding learners are effective, robust and reviewed on a regular basis. As such two senior members of staff have been designated for overseeing that everyone associated with Debut feels confident to speak out when necessary, knowing their voice will be listened to.

The designated safeguarding/whistle blowing personnel are:

1. Helena Lungley
Safeguarding Officer
01268 560552
Helena@debutacademy.com
2. Linda Edwards
Safeguarding Deputy Officer
01268 560552
linda@debutacademy.com

Safeguards

Protection

This policy is designed to offer protection to those employees of Debut who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:

- in good faith
- in the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure that it tends to show malpractice or impropriety,

Confidentiality

Debut will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible but they may be considered at the discretion of the Company. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

Untrue Allegations

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that individual. If, however, an individual makes malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if they persist with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual.

The designated individuals responsible for overseeing any whistle blowing disclosures will obtain and acknowledge full details and clarification of the complaint and will then report to the Director, Carla Hales who will decide on how the investigation will proceed.

The investigation may need to be carried out under the terms of strict confidentiality, i.e. by not informing the subject of the complaint/allegation until, or if, it becomes necessary to do so. This may be appropriate in cases of suspected fraud. The designated individual will keep the the whistle blower informed about the investigation and the outcome.

If the whistle blower is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with by the designated individual, they then have the right to raise it in confidence with Carla Hales, Director. If the investigation finds the allegations unsubstantiated and all internal procedures have been exhausted, but the whistle blower is not satisfied with the outcome, Debut recognises the lawful rights of employees to make disclosure to prescribed persons (such as the Health & Safety Executive), or, where justified elsewhere.

Please refer to Debut's linked policies below for additional information regarding whistle Blowing Standards:

- Anti-Harassment & Anti Bullying & Victimisation Policy
- Apprentice Expectation Policy
- Anti-Bribery & Fraud Policy
- Access to Fair Assessment & Appeals Policy

- Banned Substances Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff Policy
- Code of Conduct – Learner Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Counselling Policy
- Communications Policy
- Confidentiality & Disclosure Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities & Inclusion Policy
- Employer Guidance Policy on Disciplinary for Apprentices
- Employer (Work Based) Support & Expectation Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Grading, Academic Standards & Feedback Policy
- Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Induction Procedure – Staff Policy
- Induction Procedure – Learner Policy
- Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy
- Learner Support & Super Group Policy
- Learner Safeguarding & Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Learner Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- Learner Contribution & Learner Voice Policy
- Lone Worker Policy
- Mentoring – Staff Policy
- Mentoring – Learner Policy
- Meetings Policy
- Off-Site Educational Trip & In Workplace Tutoring Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Promoting Fundamental British Values Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy
- Review & Appraisal – Staff Policy
- Right to Search Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Confidentiality Policy
- Teaching & Learning Policy

Policy Revision

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