

Whistleblowing Policy (Centres and Learners)

Policy Purpose & Scope

This policy provides a safe avenue for individuals to report genuine concerns regarding suspected or identified malpractice, wrongdoing, and / or illegal activities at EduQual-approved Centres (approved training providers). This policy applies to all EduQual-approved Centres and their staff, as well as registered EduQual Learners. To request a copy of EduQual's Whistleblowing Procedures for Centres and Learners, please contact info@eduqual.org.uk.

1. Reporting (appropriate disclosures)

Disclosure of a genuine concern which in your honest and reasonable belief is in the public interest and suggests that wrongdoing has been, is being, or is likely to be committed, may qualify for protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1988.¹ Wrongdoing may include:

- Assessment malpractice (e.g. cheating, tampering with marks, or certificate fraud)
- Failure to comply with EduQual's policies and procedures (and / or regulatory requirements)
- Breach of legal obligations / criminal activity (including financial mismanagement, bribery, or fraud)
- Danger to health and safety or environmental damage
- Information relating to any of the above that has been (or is likely to be) deliberately concealed.

2. Raising a Concern

Concerns should initially be reported directly to an EduQual-approved Centre's designated Whistleblowing Officer (often a Designated Safeguarding Lead, Head of Human Resources or senior Compliance / Operations director) where known. If the whistleblower feels unable to raise the issue internally or is dissatisfied with the internal response from the Centre, the whistleblower may escalate and contact EduQual. Disclosures must be reported in writing to info@eduqual.org.uk.

3. Protection for Whistleblowers

EduQual will make every effort to keep the identity of the whistleblower confidential if requested, pending any legal obligations (e.g. by courts or police) to disclose the whistleblower's identity. In line with UK law (PIDA), anyone raising a genuine concern in good faith will not suffer any detriment, victimisation, or disciplinary action, even if the investigation reveals no wrongdoing. Note that it may not always be possible to investigate / substantiate disclosures which are made anonymously.

4. Investigation process within EduQual

As outlined in EduQual's Whistleblowing Procedures, EduQual will acknowledge any whistleblowing disclosure within 5 working days. A designated EduQual officer will assess the disclosure report and, where required, will investigate in a fair, objective, and impartial way. The progress and outcome of any investigation will be reported to the whistleblower in a timely way, subject to any confidentiality or legal constraints.²

5. Regulatory references

This policy has been designed to address Qualification Scotland Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles 2021* under Regulatory Principle (RP) 16, and Ofqual's *General Conditions of Recognition 2017* (A1, A6, and B3). Reference to Ofqual does not indicate that EduQual is recognised by Ofqual.

¹ See <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/23/contents>.

² If following the resolution of an investigation the whistleblower remains unsatisfied, they may contact EduQual's regulator (Qualifications Scotland Accreditation) at accreditation@qualifications.gov.scot. Note that the regulator may contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or may be contacted directly at <https://inwo.spsos.org.uk/contact-us>.