



Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

Qualsafe Awards (QA) responds to the needs of the first aid, social care, safety and prehospital care sectors and develops qualifications in a way that meets their needs. The quality of our qualifications is maintained via a robust and rigorous process of quality assurance procedures to protect the delivery, award, and integrity of our qualifications.

A key part of this process is to make sure we provide opportunities for QA to be informed of any malpractice or wrongdoing with respect to our qualifications.

This policy applies to anyone involved with the development, delivery, award and/or study of any QA qualifications including:

- Learners
- Trainers/Assessors/Internal Quality Assurers
- Centre staff including managers and administrators

All those accessing, reading and/or using this policy should consider the Qualification Regulator's (Ofqual) requirements, which may be found at:

<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/complaints-and-appeals/whistleblowing/>

Definitions:

Whistleblowing (Ofqual)

Whistleblowing is a term used when an individual discloses information relating to malpractice or wrongdoing and/or the covering up of malpractice or wrongdoing. The individual's employer often commits the malpractice or wrongdoing, although this is not necessarily the case.

Malpractice

Malpractice is any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the assessment process or the validity of certificates.

Malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the:

- Assessment process
- Integrity of a regulated qualification
- Validity of a result or certificate
- Reputation and credibility of Qualsafe Awards
- Qualification or the wider qualification community

Malpractice may include a range of issues from failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates. For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias toward individual or groups of Learners.

Further information can be found in the QA *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*

Complaints and Appeals

Whistleblowing does not apply to either making a complaint or an appeal. A complaint is usually an objection and could relate to poor administration or customer service. For further information on how to make a complaint, please refer to the *QA Customer Complaints Policy*.

Appeals are generally made against the outcomes of assessment if it is felt the gap between the expected and actual result is far greater than was anticipated. For further information on how to appeal, please refer to the *QA Appeals Policy*.

Whistleblowing procedure

| Raising a concern | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Stage 1 | If there is a concern that malpractice has taken place in relation to a QA qualification, normal practice is to raise it through the management of the organisation concerned. For a Learner the first point of contact would be the main Trainer/Assessor. For Centre staff this would be the Responsible Person/Head of Centre. |
| Stage 2 | If your concerns are not addressed at this stage, or you feel it is not possible to raise concerns internally, you should complete the <i>QA Whistleblowing Report Form</i> (see <i>Appendix A</i>), email it to: whistleblowing@qualsafeawards.org or post to the <i>Operations and Compliance Manager, Qualsafe Awards, City View, 3 Wapping Road, Bradford, BD3 0ED</i> . |
| QA response procedure | |
| Stage 3 | <p>You will receive an auto-acknowledgement of your email.</p> <p>We will evaluate your concern and may ask for more evidence/information.</p> <p>We will share the information with the QA Management team, so they can decide how to pursue the issue disclosed.</p> <p>We will update you on any course of action we plan to take within 10 working days of you raising your concern.*</p> <p>We will inform the regulators, as needed, of the issue raised, the course of action to be taken and keep them informed at all stages of the investigation.</p> <p>When the investigation is complete, we will tell you the outcome given the need to protect confidentiality, within 10 working days of the investigation conclusion.</p> <p>We will provide full details of the investigation/evaluation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regulators • Any other Awarding Organisations (AOs) offering similar qualifications |

Note:

1. *Given the potentially serious nature of the concerns you have raised, we appreciate that you may be anxious to receive an update on the progress of our investigation as soon as possible. However, we can assure you that we will carry out our investigations as thoroughly as possible and respond to you within our advertised timescale
2. At all stages of the matter being investigated, we will take all possible steps to protect your identity given the details/context in the *Confidentiality* section of this document.
3. We will consider each disclosure of information sensitively and carefully, and decide on an appropriate response. Information received in a disclosure may be shared with third parties if considered necessary.

Confidentiality

QA will always try to keep a whistleblower's identity confidential if asked to, although by law and regulation, we may need to disclose your identity to:

- The police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud)
- The courts (in connection with court proceedings)
- Another person to whom we are required by law to disclose your identity
- The regulators responsible for the standards of the qualifications concerned

A whistleblower should also be aware that they may be identifiable by others due to the nature or circumstances of the disclosure.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, or want to contact our customer service team:

Tel: 0330 660 0899* / 01274 381414

Calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

**Costs to call this number will vary depending on your phone company's access charge.*

between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Email: info@qualsafeawards.org

Post:

Operations & Compliance Manager

Qualsafe Awards

City View

3 Wapping Road

Bradford

BD3 0ED



Anita Goodfellow

Chief Executive Officer

18 November 2021

Owner: CEO

Regulatory References: Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulations (Ofqual) *General Conditions of Recognition (B3, D4)*

QA Documents Referenced: *QA Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, QA Customer Complaints Policy, QA Appeals Policy,*

Qualsafe Group Documents Referenced: *Qualsafe Group Whistleblowing Policy*

Appendix A

Whistleblowing Report Form

Contact information

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr) | |
| First name | |
| Surname | |
| Name of Centre | |
| Your email address | |
| Your phone number | |

Whistleblowing concern

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Qualifications affected | |
| Number of Learners affected | |
| Issue/concern details | |

Please email the completed form to whistleblowing@qualsafeawards.org or post to:

Operations & Compliance Manager
Qualsafe Awards
City View
3 Wapping Road
Bradford
BD3 0ED