SWANSEA COLLEGE
Building foundations for your future

Whistleblowing Policy

What is the Whistle-blowing policy?

This policy and procedure enables members of staff and agency contract workers at Swansea College to raise any concerns they may have regarding malpractice in connection with the College.

Whistle-blowing has been defined as '*when a worker reports suspected wrong-doing at work. Officially, this is called making a disclosure in the public interest*' (Gov.uk:2015).

Following PIDA (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998), Swansea College Whistleblowing policy and procedure provides a confidential mechanism in which employees are able to disclose information relating to such malpractice to unbiased assessors without any fear of reprisal or victimisation. The Whistleblower, however, is not a mechanism for employees to raise grievances about their personal situation. Should you need to access the College's Grievance procedure, please see the Staff Handbook.

Examples of whistle-blowing:

The following are all examples of malpractice covered by this procedure:

- Abuse of authority
- Unlawful conduct
- Fraud, financial or academic irregularity
- Criminal offences
- Failure to comply with legal or regulatory obligation
- Miscarriages of justice in the conduct of statutory or other processes
- Mistreatment of any person
- Action that has caused or is likely to cause physical danger to any person or risk serious damage to college property
- Sexual, physical or emotional abuse of members of staff or pupils
- Endangering the health or safety of any individual
- Racist incidents or acts, or racial harassment
- Involvement in extremist activities and / or accessing or distributing extremist material including online access or using other technologies
- Deliberate concealment of information which tends to show evidence of any of the above

Prevent

Anyone who becomes aware that others (staff, students, volunteers etc) who is visiting / using sites like this should inform the Principal in confidence. This is part of our duty to safeguarding vulnerable people and forms part of the prevent programme.

Confidentiality

The Principal and the College management understand that staff wishing to raise concerns in confidence should be ensured that care and attention will be paid to protect identity of staff members.

Staff, however, should be made aware that if the concern raised requires greater attention, certain documentation of evidence could reveal their identity for example, statements (verbal or written) from all parties involved. Additionally, if the investigation is taken to prosecution, the whistle-blower is likely to be called to give evidence in court.

Staff at Swansea College will not be placed under pressure from the College Board in terms of providing their name during the early stages of investigation.

What to expect from us

Swansea College will take appropriate action to ensure staff do not cause any harm to the Discloser (to include bullying or harassment from another employee on the basis that the individual has raised a concern(s) in relation to this procedure.

Disciplinary action will not be taken against a Discloser on the grounds of a disclosure made by the Discloser in accordance with this procedure, unless it is established that the discloser was malicious or vexatious.

However, if an employee has abused this policy to make false or malicious allegations, this will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence under the College's Disciplinary Procedures. A malicious allegation is a concern that is motivated by or resulting from a desire to cause harm or pain to another.

The Procedure

Staff at Swansea College should raise concerns wherever possible, to ensure the college is able to deal with such issues promptly. You should raise your concern with the office or the Principal. Depending on the sensitivity of the issue and/or the seriousness of those involved will impact who you approach. Additionally, if you feel you cannot express concerns to someone within the college it is advised that you raise concern with someone outside of the college.

Examples of which include:

- The local authority

- A relevant professional body or regulatory organization (General Teaching Council for Wales or the Wales Audit Office)
- The Children's Commissioner for Wales
- The public services Ombudsman for Wales
- The police
- A solicitor
- The Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.
- Public Concern at Work
- Channel (anti extremism) programme

Any concerns should be disclosed in writing. However, if this is not practical during teaching hours, then the disclosure can be made verbally. Within the raised concern, you should provide as much information as possible including the background and history of the concern – provide names, dates and places, where applicable.

Once Swansea College has received the information, you will be invited to attend an interview in confidence where you can provide details regarding the raised concern. You may be accompanied by a local trade union representative or a work colleague. Following the interview, the designated assessor will recommend further steps of action. You will be informed of the outcome where possible, depending on the third party's rights, and will be made aware of further steps taken in terms of the concern raised.