

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing and Confidentiality

Whistleblowing is a term used when an individual discloses information relating to malpractice or wrongdoing or covering up any malpractice or wrongdoing. This is often committed by the individual's employer, although this is not always the case.

On occasions, someone making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration, or any other issue may wish to remain anonymous, it is always preferable to reveal your identity and provide us with your contact details. If you are concerned about possible adverse consequences that may occur if your identity is revealed to other parties, please inform us that you do not wish for us to divulge your identity and we will ensure we do not disclose your details.

Excel Me are not obliged to disclose information, if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty. However, on occasions to progress an investigation it may not be possible to entirely anonymise individuals, third parties may need to be involved, in this instance this would be discussed in advance with the whistle blower/person who made the allegation. We may need to disclose identity to the following:

- The police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud)
- The courts (in connection with court proceedings)
- Any other person to whom we are required by law to disclose your identity.

The investigator assigned to review the allegation will not reveal the whistle-blowers' identity unless permission has been granted or it is necessary for the purposes of the investigation (as above). The investigator will notify the whistle-blower if it becomes necessary to reveal their identity against their wishes.

A whistle-blower should recognise that they may be identifiable by others due to the nature of circumstances of the disclosure.

There are a range of concerns that an individual may wish to be raised under the Whistleblowing Policy, including, but not limited to where they suspect that:

- An individual has committed or is complicit with an instance of malpractice.
- An individual is involved in fraud or other illegal activity regarding end point assessment or other products and services.
- They have been asked, or forced, to perform an activity that they believe constitutes as malpractice, maladministration or misconduct.

Allegations which do not count within this policy

Areas such as bullying, harassment and discrimination along with dissatisfaction with an Excel Me service are not covered by this policy.

Whistleblowing does not apply to an apprentice making an appeal against a decision.

Once a concern has been raised, Excel Me has a duty to pursue the matter, it is not possible to prevent the matter being investigated by subsequently withdrawing a concern as we are obliged by the regulators to follow up any allegation of malpractice or maladministration and investigate accordingly.

We will consider each disclosure of information sensitively and carefully and decide upon an appropriate response.

In all cases we will update you to confirm if an allegation will be investigated and will keep you updated with how this is progressing, a whistle-blower will have the opportunity to raise any concerns to the investigator about the way the investigation is being conducted. However, Excel Me are not obliged to disclose any information, if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Whilst we cannot guarantee we will disclose all matters in a way that you might wish, we will strive to deal with the investigation fairly, thoroughly, and promptly.

Notifying relevant parties

Excel Me will tell the person who made the allegation who will be handling the matter, how they can contact them and any further assistance we may need from them. We will keep them updated as to how the allegation has progressed and if an investigation has commenced, timeframes may depend upon the complexity of the case. However, we will not disclose any details of the investigation activities and it may not be appropriate to disclose any details of the outcomes due to confidentiality or legal reasons.

In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration, Excel Me will notify those involved in the allegation (unless they are under investigation in which case communication may be with the next appropriate person of authority) that we are investigating the matter.

In cases of Apprentice malpractice, we may ask the employer or training provider to investigate the issue whilst liaising with Excel Me. We will only ask the employer / training provider to investigate the matter when we have confidence that the investigation would be prompt, thorough, fair, independent, and effective.

We may communicate directly with relevant personnel who have been accused of malpractice if appropriate and/or communicate directly with the Apprentice or their representative if deemed necessary when reviewing the evidence.

Where applicable, Excel Me will inform the appropriate regulatory authority of a suspected case or a proven case of malpractice and/or maladministration, which may invalidate the award of a the End Point Assessment or if it could affect another awarding organisation. We will also keep them informed if we are investigating a large or complex case.

For more information on Excel Me investigation process please refer to the Excel Me Malpractice and Maladministration Policy on our website.

Monitoring and Review

We will review this policy annually as part of our quality assurance requirements and revise it as and when necessary, in response to employer, Training Provider and Apprentice feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous allegations.

In addition, this policy may be updated considering operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

If you would like to feedback any views, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

Excel Me Contact Details

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Tel: 01922 645097

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