



# 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 wrong doing with respect to our qualifications.

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

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

We have a separate policy for QA staff and associates, e.g. External Quality Assurers, who should refer to the *Qualsafe Group Whistleblowing Policy*.

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

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

This link also provides a further link to essential details of the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA).

## 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 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 more information refer to the *QA Appeals Policy*.

## Whistleblowing procedure

Raising a concern	
<b>Stage 1</b>	Whatever the circumstances, if there is a concern that malpractice has taken place in relation to QA qualifications, 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.
<b>Stage 2</b>	If your concerns are not addressed at this stage, or you feel it is not possible to raise concerns internally, you should contact QA's Operations & Compliance Manager using the <i>Whistleblowing Report Form</i> , at <i>Appendix A</i> .
QA response procedure	
<b>Stage 3</b>	We will evaluate your concern and may ask for more evidence/information. We will share the information with the QA Management team, so they can decide whether and how to pursue the issue disclosed. We will update you on any course of action we plan/take within 10 working days of you raising your concern. 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. When the investigation is complete, we will update you of the outcomes given the need to protect confidentiality, within 10 working days of the investigation conclusion. We will provide the regulators with full details of the investigation/evaluation and any other Awarding Organisations (AOs) offering similar qualifications.

### Note:

1. Having raised a concern, you should not contact us on a daily or otherwise regular basis for updates. We have a responsibility to all concerned with respect to confidentiality.
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, want to submit a *Whistleblowing Report Form - Appendix A* or contact our customer service team:

Tel: 0845 644 3305 between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Email: [info@qualsafeawards.org](mailto:info@qualsafeawards.org)

Post:

Operations & Compliance Manager

Qualsafe Awards

City View

3 Wapping Road

Bradford

BD3 0ED



Anita Goodfellow

**Chief Executive Officer**

20 July 2016

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 Appeals Policy*, *QA Customer Complaints 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 details

Qualifications affected	
Number of Learners affected	
Issue/concern details	

Please email the completed form to [info@qualsafeawards.org](mailto:info@qualsafeawards.org) or post to:

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