

Whistle-blowing Policy

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1.0 Introduction

It is BCNO's policy to conduct its business with honesty and integrity. We expect all staff and students to maintain high standards. Any suspected wrongdoing should be reported as soon as possible.

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This includes bribery, facilitation of tax evasion, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment, any breach of legal or professional obligations and any attempt or instruction to conceal any of the above.

This policy covers all employees, students, trustees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, student practitioners, casual workers and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to support the reporting of a whistle-blowing matter.

2.0 Policy

We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your line manager or another senior manager. However, where you prefer not to raise a matter with your line manager then you should contact the Head of HR. Where the Head of HR is involved in the matter, or you prefer not to raise the matter with the Head of HR, you may raise your concerns with the CEO. If (in what we envisage to be exceptional circumstances) both the Head of HR and the CEO are involved in the matter, you may raise your concerns with the Chair of the Trustees. Contact details are at the end of this policy.

We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a work or student colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

Following our meeting, we will arrange for an investigation to be carried out as appropriate. You may be asked to provide additional information or statement(s). You will be informed in due course of the outcome of the investigation.

Confidentiality

We hope that staff and students will feel able to voice whistle-blowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern anonymously, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

External Disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace and/or the BCNO Group. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

Protection and support for whistle-blowers

BCNO aims to encourage openness and will support individuals who raise genuine whistle-blowing concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistle-blowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Head of HR immediately. If the matter is not remedied, you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

You must not threaten or retaliate against whistle-blowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

If we conclude that an employee has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the matter may be subject to disciplinary action.

Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

4.0 Contacts

Head of HR	Helen Jones Helen.jones@bcnogroup.ac.uk
CEO	Ian Fraser ian.fraser@bcnogroup.ac.uk
Chair of Trustees	David Tasker david.tasker@bcnogroup.ac.uk
Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) (Independent whistle-blowing charity)	Helpline: (020) 3117 2520 Contact form: https://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/ Website: www.protect-advice.org.uk

5.0 Auditing

Policy Name:	Whistle-blowing Policy		
Policy Owner:	Human Resources		
Policy Approver:	Head of HR		
Audience:	All staff and students		
Storage Location:	Intranet - HR		
Effective Date:	07.2023		
Review Date: (Unless other revisions are required prior to this date)	07.2024		
Version:	V1.1 Approved		
Equality Impact Assessment:	Are there any implications for a protected characteristic group as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in this policy?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral
Details:	N/A		

6.0 Contact Us

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Version History

Version	Date	Action	By
1.0	May 2022	Harmonisation of BCOM/ESO policy. Rebrand	HJ/JD
1.1	July 2023	Annual review – amend email addresses to BCNO	HJ/JD