

“Whistleblowing” Policy & Procedure

Contents

1. Policy Statement
2. Scope of the Policy
3. Safeguards
4. Procedures for Making a Disclosure

1. Policy Statement

All employees have a duty to maintain appropriate confidentiality in relation to their employer’s affairs. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment. However, where an individual discovers activities or information that they believe shows malpractice/wrongdoing, this information should be disclosed in accordance with QBS Software Ltd Whistleblowing policy.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) gives legal protection to workers against being dismissed or victimised as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. In addition, the company believes that individuals should be able to raise legitimate concerns that do not fall within the definitions set down in the Act, without fear of reprisal.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy is designed to assist workers, including agency workers, who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not intended as a means to re-open matters that have already been addressed under the grievance or disciplinary procedures, or to question legitimate financial or business decisions taken by the company. You should not use this procedure for complaints relating to your own circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those circumstances, you should use the grievance procedure (or harassment procedure as appropriate).

This policy covers allegations of malpractice relating to such matters as listed below;

- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour including bribery
- Dangers to health and safety
- The environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- Attempts to conceal any of the above

Separate policies and procedures exist for grievances, disciplinary matters and harassment.

3. Safeguards

Protection

This policy offers protection to individuals who make disclosures about relevant malpractices provided that the individual holds a reasonable belief that the disclosure is in the public interest.

Confidentiality

The company will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. Individuals are, however, encouraged to put their name to any disclosures they make rather than seek anonymity. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. The investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the

evidence required. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the individuals working relationships are not prejudiced by the fact of the disclosure.

Untrue Allegations

Where an employee makes an allegation in good faith, but this is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that employee. If, however, an employee makes malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if he or she persists with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against the person concerned.

4. Procedures for Making a Disclosure

In the first instance any disclosure should be made to the HR Department and where possible you should provide supporting evidence. You should not bypass this procedure and air concerns externally.

The HR Department will decide on an appropriate course of action to resolve the matter. Action may include a range of approaches including:

- Informal resolution
- Changes to policy and procedure
- Internal investigation
- An independent enquiry
- Referral to the Police

It also includes the option to dismiss the concern.

The HR Department will liaise with senior management as required and has an obligation to ensure any disclosures are dealt with properly.

If there is evidence of criminal activity then the investigating officer should inform the police. The company will ensure that any internal investigation does not hinder a formal police investigation. Where any internal investigation does impact upon any criminal investigation, the Company reserves the right to recommence the investigation at a later date and only once the criminal investigation has been concluded.

Timescales

Due to the varied nature of these sorts of complaints, which may involve internal investigations and/or the police, it is not possible to lay down precise timescales for such investigations. The investigating officer will ensure that the investigations are undertaken as quickly as possible without affecting the quality and depth of those investigations.

The investigating officer, will as soon as practically possible, send a written acknowledgement of the concern to the complainant and thereafter report back to them in writing the outcome of the investigation, if appropriate. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent the company giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat information about the investigation as confidential. If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with a Director.

Investigating Procedure

All internal and/or independent investigations will be conducted as sensitively and speedily as possible, and will be carried out by someone who will not be involved in taking a decision about the allegations, or are implicated by the allegations. Where the allegation involves potential misconduct, care will be taken to carry out the investigation in accordance with the disciplinary policy and procedure.

The person(s) against whom the allegation is made will be told the claims made against them and any evidence supporting this, and be allowed to respond before any further action is taken.

On completion of the investigation, or hearing if there is a disciplinary meeting, a decision will be made on what action, if any, should be taken.

We may take appropriate action against any person found to be:

- Victimising another person for using this procedure
- Deterring any person from reporting genuine concerns under this procedure

We may also take disciplinary action against a person who does not act in accordance with this procedure.

This policy is not incorporated into your Contract of Employment and maybe varied from time to time.

A copy of the company's "Whistleblowing Policy" is available for inspection at the company notice board, intranet or HR office.

I have read and understood the Company's Whistleblowing Policy.

Signed:

Print Name:

Date: