

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

A FU⁺UREPLUS GUIDE

WHAT IS A WHISTLE- BLOWING POLICY?

A Whistleblowing Policy should sit alongside **any behavioural guidelines** you set out for your employees and should apply to all team members.

It is important that any **fraud, misconduct** or **wrongdoing** by team members or officers of your business are reported and properly dealt with.

Your policy should contain **guidelines** on the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have, and provide details on how those concerns will be dealt with.

YOUR POLICY



What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing refers to an employee who brings wrongdoings or unethical behaviour by an employer, other employee/s, or any third party associated with the operations of the business to the attention of the employer, or to a government or law enforcement agency.

By its very nature, whistleblowing is a difficult path to take for any employee. In taking steps to expose colleagues for wrongful behaviour, employees face a dilemma in knowing who to take an issue to in order to ensure the complaint is dealt with appropriately and with integrity.

Most importantly for the employee making the complaints, there needs to be a **guarantee of freedom from reprisals**.

Having an adequate policy in place is therefore vital, and encourages a culture where wrongdoing can be addressed quickly and before any regulatory or reputational damage is done.

The [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#), an amendment of the Employment Rights Act 1996, aims to protect employees who raise legitimate concerns about specific matters.

YOUR POLICY



What are 'qualifying disclosures'?

The **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998** calls legitimate concerns about specified matters 'qualifying disclosures'.

A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an employee who had reasonable belief that a wrongdoing is being / has been / is likely to be committed.

Be aware that:

- Whistleblowing must be handled **sensitively, robustly, and proportionately**. If not, whistleblowing disclosures have the potential to damage corporate reputation, absorb a huge amount of management time, and involve considerable legal costs.
- There is **no financial cap** on compensation for qualifying service or a period requirement for whistleblowing claims in the UK.

WHAT SHOULD THE POLICY COVER?

A DEFINITION OF WHISTLEBLOWING

- + Provide a legal definition of whistleblowing and clearly outline what constitutes a 'qualifying disclosure'.

PRINCIPLES

- + Provide a clear outline of your company's stance on whistleblowing, detailing that every employee should work towards preventing and eliminating wrongdoing in the workplace.

SET EXPECTATIONS

- + Set out clearly how you expect employees to conduct themselves when they are representing your business.

COMPLIANCE WITH UK LAW

- + Make sure your policy complies with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 setting out rules on how your employees should handle claims.

OUTLINE PROCEDURES

- + Provide a detailed outline on how disclosures will be investigated and dealt with, by whom, and in what timeframe.

FREEDOM FROM REPRISALS

- + Reassure employees that complaints will be dealt with sensitively and that complaints made in good faith will be free from reprisals.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1

A Whistleblowing Policy can be a **standalone** policy or form part of your **Employee Handbook**.

2

Communicate your policy to your staff and partners. This will raise **awareness** and encourage team members to make qualified disclosures without fear of victimisation.

3

Monitor and **review** your policy regularly. Make sure your policy is up-to-date and accurately reflects new legislation.

NEED MORE HELP?

We can supply a structured template for a Whistleblowing Policy. We also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support, for example help with implementing an anti-corruption reporting process.

Please let us know if you would like more information – we would be happy to provide a quote for any additional services you may need: team@future-plus.co.uk

