

## Cause for Concerns Policy

### Introduction

This policy and procedure sets out how Welcome Skills Limited will deal with any issues or concerns raised by employees in relation to failures in professional standards

The role of the assessor or trainer places Welcome Skills Limited employees in a position where they are often privy to confidential information and have access to areas of an organisation that would not normally be accessible to those who are employees or visiting in an official capacity. As a result this can sometimes raise practice issues in terms of professional accountability and standards as they are not directly employed by the organisation but continue to have a responsibility to maintain professional standards.

This policy is designed to clarify the action a Welcome Skills Limited employee is to take if they, as a result of their role, are concerned/have suspicions/have knowledge of or have witnessed an incident that is (or has the potential to be) a breach of health and safety regulations, a breach of employment regulations, or raises issues related to the protection of young people or adults at risk

Employees must raise any issues relating to safeguarding adults or young people in accordance with the Safe Learner policy.

### Initial Action to be taken by Employee

If an employee has any concerns or has witnessed incidents then in the first instance they need to speak to the manager of the establishment and report the facts clearly to them. Employees should establish what action the establishment manager proposes to take and the employee must then make it clear what action they will take i.e. reporting to their line manager, and if no action has been taken within a specified time, then escalating or contacting the appropriate authority.

Employees' professional judgement, negotiation within the organisation and/or consultation with their manager will determine what is appropriate in terms of timescales for action. Timescales need to be realistic, reflect the level and immediacy of the risk as well as the potential for harm if no action is taken.

If it is the manager who is the cause for concern, the employee must identify a senior manager from that organisation to discuss their concerns with. If they are unable to do so e.g. the owner is the manager, they must seek guidance from their line manager

Employees must record the facts of the situation via the Cause for Concern Form; including the agreements made with the organisations representative i.e. manager; their actions including dates, times and who the information was reported to, and the action they indication they would take.

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If by sharing information with the organisation regarding concerns, the employee may breach confidentiality of another organisation or the individual they support, it is imperative that they seek guidance from their line manager.

If the issue being raised relates to safeguarding adults or young people, the employee must follow the guidance in the Safe Learner policy.

Employees must ensure they record all steps taken by them and other as well as the advice given. Employees need to contact their line manager as soon as possible with all relevant information. Employees must send a written report, signed and dated to their line manager within 24 hours of the incident.

If an employee is at any time unsure of what action to take they must contact their line manager or designated person for advice.

### **Action by the line manager**

If an employee reports an incident of this nature, the manager must ensure that all appropriate facts are gathered and recorded clearly and confidentially. Establish what immediate action has been taken. The manager must ensure the employee records the events and sends their report to them within 24 hours.

The manager must ensure that if the issue relates to safeguarding that the guidance in the Safe Learner policy is followed.

If the concerns relate to breaches in health and safety or other regulations, the manager must consider the implications and seriousness of the situation before deciding what action to take.

First steps should always be to raise the concerns with the organisation or their representative unless the manager considers that to do so would place the individuals within the organisation, the Howarth House Training employee, the manager or Howarth House Training at risk.

If individuals are at significant risk, the manager has a responsibility to make it clear to the organisation what the concerns are if possible agree what actions are required. If the organisation or their representative is uncertain about being able to rectify the situation, the manager must encourage them to seek advice.

If the organisation does not respond in an appropriately professional manner or share the concerns raised and the manager is clear that a breach has taken place, the manager must inform the organisation that they are left with no alternative but to inform the appropriate regulatory authorities.

If the incident which has raised concern, is a potentially criminal one, the manager has a duty to report this to the police for further investigation by them. The manager should, if possible, provide details and evidence to support the concerns

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The manager is responsible for recording any action taken. This should be done as soon as possible with all dates, times, actions and details of those involved documented.

If the manager is unsure of what action to take they must seek advice from the Director. The Director should be kept informed throughout the process.

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