

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

The Whistleblowing Code: a brief guide

1. This note provides a brief guide to the University's Code of Practice on Whistleblowing, which is intended to encourage staff and students to report any suspected wrongdoing so that an impartial investigation can be conducted. The Code is based on whistleblowing law and includes specific reassurances that whistleblowers will be protected from victimisation.

When would I blow the whistle?

2. The Code contains a formal description of whistleblowing which, essentially, relates to the reporting of suspected wrongdoing including:
 - criminal behaviour, including fraud;
 - behaviour that endangers the health and safety of individuals;
 - behaviour that causes damage to the environment
 - professional malpractice;
 - concerns about the University's fundraising activities;
 - harassment and bullying;
 - attempts to cover up any of the above.
3. The University actively encourages students and staff to come forward with concerns. A whistleblower will not be punished for reporting concerns unless his or her reasons for doing so are malicious. Nor will a whistleblower be punished for raising a concern caused by a misunderstanding. (Please note, however, that there are other ways of raising personal complaints¹.)

How do I blow the whistle?

4. As there may be reasons why a whistleblower might feel unable to make a disclosure to a line manager, we ask that all concerns are reported to the University Secretary. Disclosures can also be made by contacting one of the other individuals listed in paragraphs 10 and 11 below. Concerns should be submitted in writing and will normally be treated confidentially. If confidentiality becomes difficult or impossible to maintain, the whistleblower will be consulted before further action takes place.
5. The University recognises that some disclosures might be made anonymously. This can make them difficult – and in some cases impossible – to investigate, however.

What happens once I have blown the whistle?

6. Depending on the nature of the allegation, the University Secretary will commission an investigation². Concerns may also be referred to an external organisation, such as the Police.
7. In any case, a whistleblower will probably need to be involved in the process, most commonly by meeting the investigator(s) in person.

¹ For example, the *Policy on dignity and mutual respect*; the grievance procedure for academic and professional members of staff set out under Statute VII, and the *Support staff procedure agreement*.

² This may be under a separate policy, for example, the *Protocol for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in academic research*, or the University's *Financial Procedures*.

8. When the investigation is complete the whistleblower will receive a report, along with details of the relevant process for review.
9. The University will protect whistleblowers from detrimental treatment. Harassment of whistleblowers will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Senior officer contact details

10. Contact details for making a whistleblowing complaint are as follows:

University Secretary, Jennifer Sewel: University-Secretary@leeds.ac.uk

Chair of Council, Alastair Da Costa: ChairofCouncil@leeds.ac.uk

Chief Financial Officer, Jane Madeley: j.e.madeley@adm.leeds.ac.uk

Director of Finance, Alan Thomson: a.c.thomson@adm.leeds.ac.uk

Dir of HR Service & Organisational Change, Linda Mortimer Pine: l.mortimer-pine@adm.leeds.ac.uk

11. Contact details for members of the Audit and Risk Committee are available from Helen Pickersgill (in the Secretariat) h.j.pickersgill@adm.leeds.ac.uk.