

Ref: ASET12

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Review Date: Jan 2021

WHISTLEBLOWING

The Policy

Individuals will often be the first to be aware of misconduct which may turn out to be fraudulent, or demonstrates corruption, professional malpractice or some other form of dishonesty.

ASET is committed to providing the means by which an individual may raise serious concerns which he/ she may have about malpractice or corruption in the workplace. Individuals are assured that genuine concerns which are raised without malice will be investigated. This policy outlines the means by which individuals may raise concerns without fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Definition of Malpractice or Corruption

This policy is not intended to provide a means for individuals to express any dissatisfaction with their personal circumstances. Such matters should be raised under ASET's Grievance procedure. Rather, this policy is intended to provide a way by which malpractice or corruption may be reported in confidence, and without fear of reprisal.

ASET regards malpractice and corruption to include (but not limited to):

- a. Criminal activity
- b. Failure to comply with any legal obligation or regulatory requirement
- c. Miscarriages of justice
- d. Danger to health and safety
- e. Damage to the environment
- f. Bribery under our Anti-bribery policy
- g. Financial fraud or mismanagement
- h. Negligence
- i. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- j. The deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

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The Procedure

All matters raised under this policy will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The procedure for raising a concern under this policy is as follows:

- a. Concerns should be raised using ASET's whistleblowing form – a copy of which is attached to this policy. Alternatively concerns can be raised orally with the individuals detailed below.
- b. Where ever possible, the individual should raise the matter in the first instance with a member of the management team.
- c. If there is a reason why an individual cannot raise the matter with a member of the management team (e.g where the matter is more serious, or the individual feels their complaint has not been addressed or if the concern is about a member of the management team) the matter should be raised with the CEO.
- d. If the complaint is against the CEO, the matter should be raised with the chair of ASET's Board of Management.
- e. The allegations will then be investigated. This will normally include meeting with the individual to discuss their concerns. The individual may bring a companion to this meeting should they wish, providing any such companion respects the confidentiality of the disclosure and any subsequent investigation.
- f. The CEO (or where appropriate Chair of the Board) will then decide what action (if any) is to be taken. Action could include referral to the police/other relevant authorities or the instigation of ASET's Disciplinary Policy.
- g. The CEO (or Chair where appropriate) will write to the individual who raised the matter and inform him/her of the outcome of the investigation where possible, which should be treated in confidence. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent ASET giving the individual specific details of the investigation or outcome.
- h. If the individual is dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may address his/her concerns to the Secretary to the Board of Management.

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External Disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide a mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases individuals should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for an individual to report their concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely, if ever be appropriate to alert the media. ASET strongly encourages individuals to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are below.

Helpline: (020) 7404 6609

Email:

whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Confidentiality

ASET hopes that all individuals will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However if an individual wants to raise their concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep their identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating their concern to know your identity, we will discuss it with you.

However, ASET does not encourage individuals to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from the individual raising the complaint. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible.

False Accusations

Abuse of this policy by individuals making false or malicious allegations or with a view to personal gain will be regarded as a serious offence. This policy does not in any way prevent an individual seeking redress at law against anyone making false allegations against him/her.

Victimisation

It will be a disciplinary offence to victimize, discriminate or otherwise subject an individual to a detriment who has raised a genuine concern under the terms of this policy.

If an individual believes that they have suffered any such treatment, they should inform a member of Management immediately. If the matter is not remedied the individual should raise it formally using the ASET Grievance Procedure.

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Status:	Final
Approved by:	CEO
SMT Sponsor:	HR and Administration Manager
Date of Version:	October 2015
Responsibility for Implementation/Review:	HR and Administration
Manager Review Date:	January 2021

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Form for Making a Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)

This form is intended for use by any individual, who wishes to raise an issue about wrongdoing in the workplace.

This form should be used to report wrongdoing within ASET (for example, financial irregularities or health and safety concerns), rather than to raise a personal grievance (for example if you would like to make an allegation of bullying or harassment, or are complaining that your contract of employment has been breached)

If you are unsure about whether your concerns are best dealt with under the ASET's Whistleblowing Policy or Grievance Policy, please read the ASET whistleblowing Policy, which provides examples of the issues that should be reported using this form, if having read the Whistleblowing Policy, you remain unsure about which procedure to use, please consult with a member of the management team, for further advice.

Once you have submitted this form, ASET's Whistleblowing Policy will be invoked. This will result in an investigation, which will involve anyone you may have implicated overleaf.

In certain circumstances, you can request your concerns be kept anonymous. Where possible ASET will respect a request for anonymity, but cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so.

This form should be completed and delivered to the appropriate individual as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy in an envelope marked 'confidential' or sent as an email attachment with 'confidential' in the subject line.

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Formal Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)	
Name:	
Date:	
Summary of Disclosure:	
Please set out the details of the issue that you wish to raise, providing examples where possible, particularly dates, times, locations and the identities of those involved. You may attach additional sheets if required.	
Individuals Involved:	
Please provide the names and contact details of any people involved in your concerns, including witnesses.	
Outcome Requested:	
Please set out how you would like to see the issue dealt with, and why and how you believe that this will resolve the issue.	

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Declaration:	
I confirm that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.	
Form completed by:	
Signature:	
For Completion by ASET:	
Date form received by ASET:	
Name of recipient and job role:	
Signature:	