



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1. Introduction and Purpose

Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing. In this guidance, we call that “making a disclosure” or “blowing the whistle”. The wrongdoing will typically (although not necessarily) be something they have witnessed at work. In the context of this policy, whistleblowing pertains to employees or staff members and not other stakeholders.

- UWC East Africa is committed to providing the highest educational and employment standards to its stakeholders and staff. In light of that commitment, all staff with serious concerns about any aspect of their work, have a right and duty to come forward and express those concerns without fear of reprisal, victimisation or harassment.

In most cases, concerns or complaints will be dealt with through other procedures, such as those for resolving grievances or disciplinary. However, in some cases, it is recognised that staff will want to come forward on a confidential basis (whistleblowing). This policy is to make it clear that this can be achieved without fear of reprisal, victimisation or harassment.

2. Consultation and Information

- UWC East Africa will ensure that every new member of staff, temporary or permanent, is made aware of all requirements and expectations stipulated in the current Staff Handbook.

Staff are protected when they make a disclosure of information which they reasonably believe indicates one or more of the following matters:

This list is not exhaustive:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or likely to be committed;
- a colleague has failed, is failing, or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject;
- a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- that the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered;

- school property has been, is being or is likely to be damaged;
- that any of these matters has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

• It should be noted that in making a disclosure, the member of staff must have a reasonable belief that the information disclosed shows one or more of the matters listed above. The belief need not be correct, but the member of staff must show that they held the belief and that it was a reasonable belief in the circumstances at the time of the disclosure, and that they acted in good faith. UWC East Africa will not tolerate malicious or vindictive disclosures, or disclosures made for personal interests which abuse the intentions of this policy, and if such a disclosure is made, the individual(s) involved will be subject to action under disciplinary procedures.

In addition to the above, UWC East Africa expects and encourages members of staff to come forward with disclosures if they suspect:

- fraud, corruption or malpractice;
- failure to deliver approved standards of safeguarding;
- damaging personal conflicts;
- bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation in the workplace;
- serious breaches of the standards set out in the current Staff Handbook.

- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member(s) or line manager notified of a concern have the responsibility to:

- ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;
- where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;
- keep the member of staff advised of progress where appropriate;
- ensure that necessary action is taken.

3. Confidential Reporting

Legislation protects employees against unfair dismissal or being subjected to detriment as a result of a protected disclosure. If anyone tries to prevent a member of staff from coming forward to express a concern, this may be treated as a disciplinary offence.

4. Whom to Contact

- In most cases, the member of staff should be able to raise any concerns with their line manager. If for some reason this is not possible (for example, if the staff member reasonably believes their line manager to be involved in the wrong-doing), an approach should be made directly to the next person in line management. If necessary, the member of staff can ask for a confidential meeting.

- A member of staff may also, in the first instance, report a concern to one of the members of the SLT. These concerns should be put in writing and include, insofar as it is possible, some background, relevant dates and the reason why the situation has caused concern. The recipient of the information will acknowledge the concern and a meeting or interview can be held to discuss the concern. At this meeting, the member of staff raising the matter may be accompanied by a work colleague or a Staff Association representative.

5. Safeguard Against Reprisal, Harassment and Victimisation

The UWC East Africa Board will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of members of staff when matters are raised in accordance with the whistleblowing provisions. Any member of staff who victimises or harasses a member of staff as a result of their having raised a concern in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedures.

The UWC East Africa Board:

- Is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of employees.
- Recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, but also that employees have a duty to report for the benefits of the school, staff and students.
- Recognises that support will need to be provided to the employee, at the time the allegation is raised, during the investigation itself and following the outcome of the investigation.
- Will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect staff when they raise a concern.
- Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures.

6. This Policy has been approved by UWC East Africa's Board (Date here) and will be reviewed regularly and updated as appropriate.