

Tailored Tuition

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Introduction

Tailored Tuition is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty and accountability in all aspects of its work. We recognise that staff are often the first to become aware of concerns relating to poor practice, misconduct or safeguarding, and we encourage them to raise those concerns without fear of disadvantage or victimisation.

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information relating to suspected wrongdoing or malpractice that is in the public interest. This may include conduct that is unlawful, unsafe, unethical or inconsistent with the organisation's policies and values.

This policy applies to all staff, including self-employed tutors, volunteers, contractors and anyone working on behalf of Tailored Tuition.

2. Aims and Scope

Tailored Tuition is committed to creating a culture where concerns can be raised openly and confidently. Concerns raised under this policy will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and acted upon where necessary.

This policy aims to:

- encourage staff to raise genuine concerns about wrongdoing or poor practice;
- provide a clear process for reporting concerns;
- ensure concerns are considered fairly and appropriately; and
- protect individuals who raise concerns in good faith from victimisation or detrimental treatment.

This policy may be used to report concerns relating to:

- unlawful conduct;
- safeguarding concerns;
- health and safety risks;
- fraud, corruption or financial irregularities;
- abuse of authority;
- discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- breaches of organisational policies or professional standards; or
- attempts to conceal any of the above.

3. Protection for Staff

Tailored Tuition will not tolerate victimisation, harassment or detrimental treatment of any individual who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

Where a concern is raised honestly and reasonably, the individual will be supported throughout the process, even if the concern is not ultimately substantiated.

Knowingly making a false or malicious allegation may result in appropriate action being taken.

4. Confidentiality

Tailored Tuition recognises that individuals may wish to raise concerns in confidence and will make every effort to protect their identity where appropriate.

However, it may not always be possible to guarantee anonymity if the matter proceeds to a formal investigation or legal proceedings. Anonymous concerns will still be considered, particularly where they relate to the safety or welfare of children and young people.

5. Raising a Concern

Concerns should normally be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Where the concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it should be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will seek advice from the appropriate local authority or other relevant safeguarding authority where necessary.

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible and, where practicable, should be provided in writing, including relevant dates, facts and supporting information. Concerns may also be raised verbally where this is more appropriate.

Where a concern relates to safeguarding or an allegation against a member of staff, it will be managed in accordance with Tailored Tuition's **Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Procedure** and **Safeguarding Policy**.

6. Responding to Concerns

All concerns will be acknowledged as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within five working days.

Tailored Tuition will assess each concern to determine the most appropriate course of action. This may include an internal investigation, referral to the police, referral to Children's Social Care or Social Services, or consultation with another appropriate authority.

Where a statutory agency is investigating a matter, Tailored Tuition will cooperate fully and will not undertake any internal investigation that could compromise those enquiries.

7. Investigation

Where an internal investigation is appropriate, it will be carried out fairly, proportionately and without unnecessary delay.

Where possible, investigations will normally be completed within 10 to 15 working days. Where this is not possible, the individual raising the concern will be kept informed of progress where appropriate.

Following the investigation, Tailored Tuition will determine whether further action is required and will communicate the outcome where it is appropriate and lawful to do so.

8. Taking a Concern Further

Where an individual believes that a concern has not been addressed appropriately, or feels unable to raise the matter internally, they may seek advice or report their concern to an appropriate external organisation.

This may include:

- the relevant local authority;
- the Police;
- the NSPCC;
- Protect (the UK's whistleblowing charity); or
- another relevant regulatory or safeguarding body.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current legislation, statutory guidance and organisational practice.

Appendix A

Guidance for Staff

If you have a concern

Do:

- Raise concerns as soon as possible.
- Record relevant facts, dates and details accurately.
- Report concerns to the appropriate person.
- Keep appropriate records.
- Seek advice if you are unsure how to proceed.

Do not:

- Ignore concerns or assume someone else will report them.
- Attempt to investigate concerns yourself.
- Discuss concerns with individuals who do not need to know.
- Promise confidentiality where safeguarding concerns exist.
- Delay reporting concerns.

Remember that individuals who raise genuine concerns in good faith will be supported by Tailored Tuition and will not be subjected to victimisation or detrimental treatment as a result of speaking up.