



## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

**Policy Owner:** Head Office

**Governance Oversight:** Grand Council

**Applies to:** Staff, examiners, Teacher Members, centres, contractors, volunteers, trustees, committee members and members of the public

**Review Cycle:** Annual or following legislative, regulatory or organisational change

**Last Updated:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026

### 1. Purpose and Statement of Intent

International Performing Arts & Theatre Limited (I-PATH) is committed to conducting all its activities with integrity, transparency and accountability, and to maintaining public confidence in qualifications and assessments.

Whistleblowing is a vital mechanism for:

- protecting children and young people
- identifying malpractice or wrongdoing
- ensuring compliance with regulatory and legal obligations
- upholding professional and ethical standards

I-PATH encourages individuals to speak up without fear and is committed to ensuring that whistleblowers are supported and protected.

### 2. What Is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information that the individual reasonably believes shows wrongdoing, malpractice, misconduct or serious risk, which is in the public interest.

This may include (but is not limited to):

- safeguarding or child protection concerns
- criminal activity
- malpractice or maladministration in assessments or qualifications
- breaches of Ofqual requirements or awarding organisation rules
- failure to comply with legal or regulatory obligations
- financial fraud, mismanagement or corruption
- serious health and safety risks
- abuse of authority or professional boundaries
- misuse of data or confidential information
- deliberate concealment of any of the above



Whistleblowing is not the same as a complaint about service quality or outcomes, although a matter raised as a complaint may later be identified as whistleblowing or safeguarding.

### **3. Who Can Raise a Whistleblowing Concern?**

This policy applies to:

- employees
- examiners and senior examiners
- Teacher Members and centres
- contractors, consultants and volunteers
- committee members
- learners, parents/carers and members of the public

A whistleblower is any person who raises a concern in good faith, regardless of their role or relationship with I-PATH.

### **4. Safeguarding and Whistleblowing**

Where a whistleblowing concern involves:

- the safety or welfare of a child or young person
- allegations against an adult
- abuse, neglect, exploitation or unsafe practice

it must be treated as a safeguarding matter and managed in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding concerns must never be downgraded to complaints or operational issues.

### **5. Protection for Whistleblowers**

I-PATH is committed to ensuring that whistleblowers:

- are not subjected to victimisation, retaliation or disadvantage
- are treated fairly and respectfully
- are supported throughout the process

Employees and workers are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Any attempt to intimidate, silence or penalise a whistleblower will be treated as a serious breach of policy and may result in disciplinary or regulatory action.

### **6. Confidentiality and Anonymity**

- Whistleblowing concerns will be handled confidentially wherever possible
- Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis



- Anonymous disclosures will be considered where sufficient information is provided

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where disclosure is required:

- to protect children or others
- by law or statutory agencies
- to enable a fair and effective investigation

## 7. How to Raise a Concern

Concerns should normally be raised with:

- Head Office - Governance & Compliance

Concerns may be raised:

- verbally or in writing
- directly or via secure channels

Where the concern relates to Head Office, or where it would be inappropriate to raise it internally, concerns may be raised with:

- the Chair of the Grand Council
- external bodies (see Section 11)

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible and include factual information where available.

## 8. Information to Include

Where possible, whistleblowers should provide:

- the nature of the concern
- the individuals, centres or qualifications involved
- relevant dates, locations or activity
- any supporting evidence or documentation
- whether the concern has been raised previously

A lack of complete information will not prevent a concern from being considered.

## 9. Assessment and Investigation

All whistleblowing concerns will be:

- acknowledged promptly
- assessed to determine appropriate action
- investigated proportionately and fairly

Investigations may involve:

- internal review
- referral to safeguarding procedures
- referral to the awarding organisation
- referral to statutory authorities

Internal investigations will not compromise safeguarding or criminal processes.

## **10. Malicious or Bad-Faith Allegations**

Concerns raised in good faith will be supported, even if they are not upheld.

However, deliberately false or malicious allegations may result in:

- disciplinary action
- withdrawal of approval or role
- further investigation

## **11. External Disclosure**

Where internal routes are inappropriate or exhausted, concerns may be raised with:

- the awarding organisation
- statutory safeguarding agencies
- the Police
- the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

I-PATH supports individuals who escalate concerns appropriately in the public interest.

## **12. Record Keeping and Audit**

All whistleblowing concerns will be:

- recorded accurately
- stored securely
- retained in line with data protection and retention policies
- auditable for governance and regulatory purposes

## **13. Governance Oversight and Review**

Whistleblowing activity is:

- monitored by Head Office
- reported to the Grand Council
- reviewed to identify trends or systemic risk

Learning from whistleblowing informs:

- policy updates
- training
- quality assurance and risk management

## **14. Relationship to Other Policies**

This policy must be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Malpractice & Maladministration Policy
- Sanctions Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Code of Professional Standards
- Governance Framework

## **Final Statement**

Speaking up protects children, protects standards and protects public confidence.

**Silence is a risk. Whistleblowing is a professional responsibility.**