

AWARDING ORGANISATION POLICY

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (AOP-009)

GQA – Our Mission and Values

GQA is an Awarding Body for specialist sectors and occupational roles. Our current qualifications cover a wide range of sectors, including the Glass and Fenestration Industries, Construction, Print, Automotive Glazing, Polymers, Nuclear, Chimney Occupations, Paper, Meteorology and Print.

Our aim is to work with industries where we have access to knowledge either within GQA or by developing strong working relationships with sector specialists, giving us a real ability to discuss specific qualifications with both centres and employers.

Qualification development is carried out in accordance with regulatory and Sector Skill Council requirements, using industry experts throughout the development and consultation processes.

At GQA, our purpose is simple: to add life to a lifetime of learning. We believe that every learning opportunity is a chance for a personal breakthrough. That's why our colleagues are committed to creating vibrant and enriching learning experiences designed for real-life impact.

Contents

1. Policy scope and purpose
2. Policy statement
3. The Public Disclosure Act 1998
4. Contact details
5. Reference documents
6. Regulatory reference
7. Review Date

1. Policy scope and purpose

This policy applies to individuals who do not work for GQA and who wish to make certain disclosures to us concerning or connected to:

- the delivery of GQA
- matters affecting public confidence in GQA



2. Policy statement

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing involves reporting malpractice or wrongdoing by an individual's employer or approved centre.

Unlike complaints handled by GQA's Complaints procedure (GQA 414-2025), whistleblowing aims to prevent harm or hold organisations accountable. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) protects whistleblowers from dismissal or reprisals if their disclosure concerns specific types of malpractice or wrongdoing.

3. The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)

If a worker makes a protected disclosure under PIDA:

- they have the right not to be subjected to detriment by their employer
- They will not breach their employment contract by making the disclosure.

Workers include learners and employees/contractors of GQA-approved centres.

A disclosure to GQA may be protected under PIDA if:

- made in good faith
- disclosed to the correct prescribed person in the proper way
- the worker reasonably believes the information and allegations are substantially true
- the worker does not seek personal gain
- It is reasonable in all circumstances to make the disclosure.

Additionally, one of the following must apply:

- the disclosure relates to exceptionally serious malpractice or wrongdoing
- the worker reasonably believes they will be harmed if disclosed to their employer
- The worker believes evidence will be concealed or destroyed if disclosed to their employer.

Some disclosures do not qualify if they break the law or if the information is protected under legal professional privilege.

Whistleblowing examples to GQA include:

- workers disclosing an organisation's malpractice or failure to meet recognition conditions.
- candidates or parents/guardians revealing a centre's malpractice or failure to maintain delivery integrity.

For concerns about GQA-approved centres, contact the relevant regulatory authority, who typically refer it back to the awarding organisation for investigation.

4. Contact details

Anyone wishing to make a disclosure can do so in writing to:

Chief Executive Officer
GQA Qualifications Ltd
Unit 1, 12 O'clock Court
Attercliffe Road
Sheffield
S4 7WW



Email: responsibleofficer@gqaqualifications.com

The following information would need to be provided in order for GQA to investigate.

- name of the Approved Centre and/or individuals concerned
- number/names of candidates affected
- details of the concerns.

5. GQA responsibility

If you make a whistleblowing disclosure and provide contact details, we will acknowledge receipt. We will ask for evidence to support your disclosure.

Anonymous disclosures will be considered, but may be harder to investigate. Each disclosure is reviewed sensitively, and we may share information with regulatory authorities if necessary.

We usually update you on actions taken within ten working days, but complex issues may take longer.

Confidentiality

We strive to keep your identity confidential, but we cannot guarantee it. Your identity may be disclosed to:

- law enforcement agencies
- courts, or
- others as required by law.

Recognise that you may be identifiable due to the nature of the disclosure.

Getting advice

If you are unsure as to how best to proceed, consider the following:

- contact Protect for free, confidential whistleblowing advice on 020 3117 2520 or use the advice line available via their website <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

6. Related documents

AOP-10 GQA Complaint Policy
GQA 414-2025 GQA Complaint Procedure

7. Regulatory references

Regulator	Regulatory or guidance source	Regulatory condition, criteria or principle
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	A4, A6, A7, A8
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	B3
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	C1, C2
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	G4
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	H2
OFQUAL	General Conditions of Recognition	I2
QUALIFICATIONS SCOTLAND ACCREDITATION	Regulatory Principles (2021)	6, 16, 17



8. Policy reference information

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