



## Whistleblowing Policy

### Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the LSS Partnership Group.

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<b>Ratified by:</b>	TMET Executive Board
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### Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.1	31.1.2023	RJ/CBR	Addition of further examples of misconduct, Confidentiality, Investigation and Contacts sections in line with TMET policy.

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Scope.....	3
3. Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
4. Equality and Diversity .....	4
5. Principles.....	4
6. Whistleblowing Routes .....	5
7. Confidentiality.....	6
8. Investigation and outcome .....	7
9. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness of the Policy .....	7
10. Review.....	7
11. Contacts .....	7

## Whistleblowing Policy

### 1. Introduction

Leicestershire Secondary SCITT (LSS) has designed its programme to create teachers who:

- are leaders in the classroom and (eventually) beyond
- are excellent subject leaders and members of subject communities
- are research-informed professionals
- reflect on their teaching in order to continue to improve and thrive
- have the resilience to remain in the classroom
- are a positive impact on the teacher community

As a SCITT we recognise that we are offering trainees an *initial* year of teacher education. We have designed our programme and curriculum to reflect that trainees are novices to teaching, but also with the ambition to create a model of professional learning that will remain with them throughout their careers, and see them through to being experts. This is rooted in our research-informed approach.

Our course leads to the award of QTS accredited by the Leicestershire Secondary SCITT, and the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, accredited by the University of Leicester. As this is a professional qualification it is expected that trainees demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct that is consistent with Teachers' Standards, Initial Teaching Training Criteria (ITT CCF), Disclosure and Barring Services legislation and Safeguarding legislation.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all LSS trainees.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Leicestershire Secondary SCITT (LSS) Partnership Board is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring that an appropriate framework is in place to enable trainees to raise concerns.

The Director of LSS is responsible for ensuring that trainees and others do not suffer a detriment in the application of this policy and procedure. The Director of LSS will also ensure that:

- Any individual who makes a disclosure of wrongdoing or malpractice in good faith is protected against victimisation.
- Anyone who victimises a whistleblower will be subject to the LSS's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Any matters raised will be treated seriously, swiftly, consistently, fairly and professionally
- Any matter raised will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by an appropriate senior person

- The whistleblower's identity will, so far as is possible, remain confidential
- Any trainee who knowingly makes false allegations against a colleague will be subject to the LSS's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Any trainee who in good faith, makes allegations that turn out to be unfounded will not be penalised for being genuinely mistaken.

The Director of LSS is responsible for ensuring that all LSS trainees are aware of this policy. The LSS team will also ensure that:

- the policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- whistleblowers are treated with dignity and respect and offered access to appropriate support
- whistleblowers are encouraged to access additional support via their trade unions and the employee assistance programme

**LSS leaders and managers** must ensure they deal with whistleblowing issues swiftly, respectfully, thoroughly and professionally, whilst upholding confidentiality as far as possible.

All **LSS trainees** have a responsibility for raising concerns they have, thus providing the organisation with the opportunity to resolve any issues that arise. It is expected that wherever possible trainees should raise concerns prior to malpractice or wrongdoing occurring. However, where this isn't possible, it is expected that trainees should raise concerns at the earliest opportunity in line with this policy and procedure.

#### 4. Equality and Diversity

LSS is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines, adhering to current legislation e.g. the Equality Act 2010.
- Delivering high quality teacher training that meets the diverse needs of its trainee population, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged.

LSS is committed to securing equality of opportunity for staff and students alike and is keen to ensure that equality of opportunity underpins all policies, practices, procedures and actions. We require that all trainees notify the LSS SCITT of any concerns related in inequality.

For more information on equality and diversity SCITT trainees can refer to the Diversity and Equality policy.

#### 5. Principles

Trainees should ensure they have an awareness and understanding of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing. Trainees should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature to the Director of LSS. Any matter raised under the procedure will be

investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be shared with the trainee who raised the issue. The law provides protection for people who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters and these are called qualifying disclosures. A qualifying disclosure is one made in the public interest by someone who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence
- a miscarriage of justice
- an act creating risk to health and safety
- an act causing damage to the environment
- a break of any other legal and/or safeguarding obligation
- bribery
- financial fraud or mismanagement
- negligence
- breach of our internal policies and procedures including our Code of Conduct
- conduct likely to damage our reputation
- unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- other unethical behaviour, or
- the deliberate concealment of any of the above

is being, has been, or is likely to be committed. It is not necessary for the trainee to have proof that such an act is being, has been or is likely to be committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. The trainee has no responsibility for investigating the matter as it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

No trainee will be victimised for whistleblowing. This means that the opportunities for learning and development will not be prejudiced because he/she has raised a legitimate concern.

Victimisation of a trainee for whistleblowing will be viewed as a disciplinary offence. If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure, the LSS's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure may be used in addition to any appropriate external measures. Maliciously making a false allegation will be viewed as a disciplinary offence.

## **6. Whistleblowing Routes**

In the first instance, unless the individual reasonably believes the Director of LSS to be involved in the wrongdoing, any concerns should be raised with the Director of LSS. If he/she believes the Director of LSS is involved the individual should report the matter to the Director of The Mead Institute of Professional Learning or TMET Human Resources ([hr@tmet.uk](mailto:hr@tmet.uk)).

If appropriate, the Director of LSS will undertake a preliminary investigation and must then discuss the matter with the TMET Human Resources Department and/or the CEO. A more thorough investigation may then be undertaken as appropriate. This will include an interview and statement from the individual who raised the issue(s), and potentially other witness statements alongside the collation of

any relevant evidence. The Director of LSS investigating the issue will report to a panel of representatives from the TMET Executive Team who will then take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. If disciplinary action is required the Director of LSS will investigate the matter. On conclusion of any investigation the individual will be advised of the outcome of the investigation (including the actions that the LSS Executive Team has either taken or intends to take). If no further action is to be taken the rationale for this decision will be shared with the individual. If the individual reasonably believes that appropriate action has not been taken he/she should report the matter to the proper authority. The legislation sets out a number of bodies to which qualifying disclosures may be made, including:

- HM Revenue and Customs
- Financial Conduct Authority
- Competition and Markets Authority
- Health and Safety Executive
- Environment Agency
- Independent Office for Police Conduct
- Serious Fraud Office

Whistleblowers can also made a disclosure to Ofsted by telephone (0300 123 3155), via email ([whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk)) or in writing to: WBHL, Ofsted Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.

## **7. Confidentiality**

We hope that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.

We do not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to one of the other contact points listed in section 5 and appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality. If you are in any doubt, you can seek advice from Protect, the independent whistleblowing charity, which offers a confidential helpline. Contact details are given at the end of this policy.

Where we receive anonymous complaints, we will make a determination about whether to investigate based on:

- a. the seriousness of the issue raised
- b. the credibility of the concern; and

- c. the likelihood of confirming the allegation from other sources

## 8. Investigation and outcome

Once you have raised a concern, we will carry out an initial assessment. We will inform you of the outcome of this within five school days of the concern being raised, indicating how we propose to deal with the matter and telling you whether further investigations will take place, and if not, why not. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.

We will take all whistleblowing disclosures/complaints seriously, including any that are made anonymously. Where disclosures/complaints are made anonymously, it will obviously not be possible to either acknowledge the complaint or provide any feedback. In cases where anonymous disclosures/complaints are received via email, the matters will be investigated, but only an acknowledgement sent to the sender. No feedback/outcome will be communicated in such cases.

We will aim to conclude the investigation in a timely way, usually within 20 school days of receipt of your concern. However, a complicated matter may take longer and, if this is the case, you will be informed of the likely timescale.

Following the investigation, the person handling your concern will write to you confirming the outcome of the investigation with actions taken to investigate, the reasons for the decision and, if appropriate, any actions to be taken to resolve the complaint. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details.

## 9. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness of the Policy

Effectiveness and compliance of this policy will be monitored by the Director of LSS. The Partnership Group will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on a regular basis.

## 10. Review

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed within one year of the date of implementation.

## 11. Contacts

Protect (formerly known as Public Concern at Work) (Independent whistleblowing charity)	Helpline 020 3117 2520 ( <a href="http://protect-advice.org.uk">protect-advice.org.uk</a> )
Director LSS	Name: Adam Glover Email: <a href="mailto:AGlover@rushey-tmet.uk">AGlover@rushey-tmet.uk</a>
Director of The Mead Institute of Professional Learning	Name: Sara McAdam Email: <a href="mailto:SMcAdam@tmet.uk">SMcAdam@tmet.uk</a>
ATL branch of NEU	Email: <a href="mailto:atlleicester@atl.org.uk">atlleicester@atl.org.uk</a> Tel: 0116 239 2672
ACSL	Email: <a href="mailto:hotline@ascl.org.uk">hotline@ascl.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="https://www.ascl.org.uk/">https://www.ascl.org.uk/</a> Tel: 0116 299 1122
GMB	Name: Colin Wyatt Email: <a href="mailto:colin.wyatt@gmb.org.uk">colin.wyatt@gmb.org.uk</a> Tel: 0116 2324515

NASUWT	Name: Stephen Bird Email: <a href="mailto:secretary.leicester@nasuwt.org.uk">secretary.leicester@nasuwt.org.uk</a> Tel: 0115 976 7180
NAHT	Name: Robert Smith, NAHT Regional Officer Email: <a href="mailto:robert.smith@naht.org.uk">robert.smith@naht.org.uk</a> Tel: 0115 9233434
NEU	Name: Joseph Wyglendacz (Leicester City NEU) Email: <a href="mailto:joseph.wyglendacz@neu.org.uk">joseph.wyglendacz@neu.org.uk</a> Name: Simon Clarkson (Leicestershire NEU) Email: <a href="mailto:simon.clarkson@neu.org.uk">simon.clarkson@neu.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:east.midlands@neu.org.uk">east.midlands@neu.org.uk</a> (Regional Office) Tel: 0115 838 6707 Name: Pauline Town (Leicestershire NEU. Assistant Secretary Case Worker) Email: <a href="mailto:Pauline.Town@neu.org.uk">Pauline.Town@neu.org.uk</a>
Unite	Name: Lakhy Mahal Email: <a href="mailto:lakhy.mahal@unitetheunion.org">lakhy.mahal@unitetheunion.org</a> Tel: 0116 2532020
UNISON Leicester City	Name: Samuel Randfield Email: <a href="mailto:unison.leicestercity@virgin.net">unison.leicestercity@virgin.net</a> Tel: 0116 299 5103 National Helpline: 0800 0857 857
Voice branch of Community	Name: Letitia McCalla Email: <a href="mailto:lmccalla@community-tu.org">lmccalla@community-tu.org</a> Email: <a href="mailto:contact@voicetheunion.org.uk">contact@voicetheunion.org.uk</a> Tel: 01332 372 337