



# Whistle Blowing Policy

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## **1. A Statement of Intent**

This policy should be used as a guide for Alt Valley Community Trust (AVCT) staff, students, employers and placement providers, also anyone who is invited into AVCT to deliver any training sessions to AVCT learners.

AVCT makes a moral commitment to provide learning in a safe, secure and diverse environment with equality of opportunity for all. By adopting and implementing a whistle blowing policy AVCT will ensure all staff and partners have the opportunity to report any concerns in an open and transparent manner. AVCT is fully committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy is reviewed annually to make transparent the core principles by which AVCT intends to conduct business, the standard of learning we intend to deliver and to publicly communicate the levels of responsibility of AVCT and the employers where learners are employed or placed. The contents of this policy are the ultimate responsibility of CEO and Lesley Baugh Safeguarding Lead.

## **2. What is whistle blowing?**

Whistle blowing encourages and enables employees to raise serious concerns within AVCT rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.

Employees are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong within the company. However, they may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to AVCT.

### **3. Who does the Policy apply to?**

The policy applies to all employees, (including those designated as casual hours, temporary, agency, authorised volunteers or work experience), all learners and employers who work with AVCT. It also covers all learning mentors and support staff.

### **4. The Aims of the Policy**

- To provide avenues for you to raise concerns in confidence and receive feedback on any action taken.
- To ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- To reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation, if you have a reasonable belief that you have made a disclosure in good faith.

### **5. What Types of Concern are covered?**

- Sexual or physical abuse of clients
- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law e.g. possession of drugs
- Discrimination
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees – under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the workplace for example
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Other unethical conduct
- Damage to the environment

Not to be confused with the AVCT Grievance Procedure - which relates to complaints about your own employment or training.

### **6. How to report a concern**

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns either verbally or in writing with your immediate tutor/supervisor/manager. This may depend, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that management is involved you should approach the CEO Phil Knibb directly.

### **7. Safeguards and Victimisation**

AVCT recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you provide a service.

AVCT will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

## **8. Confidentiality**

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note that:

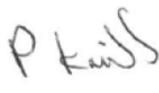
- Staff must disclose the information in good faith
- Staff must believe it to be substantially true
- Staff must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- Staff must not seek any personal gain

## **9. Review of policy and procedures**

This policy will be reviewed by CEO in conjunction with Senior Management team every year or as necessary. Information from incident forms, staff meetings, case conference notes, cause for concern logs and student/employer questionnaires will all be used to ensure the policy is reviewed in an open and transparent manner. The updated version of the policy will be displayed in AVCT reception; a copy will be held in the company quality assurance system, and a copy will be available to all relevant parties.

This policy was produced by the CEO on behalf of AVCT.

CEO: Phil Knibb

Signed: 

Date: 01/08/2024