

ASDAN Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Policy Owner – ASDAN Responsible Officer

Review History	
V1	July 2018
V2	February 2019
V2,1	January 2022
V2.2	April 2023
V3	September 2023
V4	August 2026
Next Review	August 2028

1. Purpose

1.1 This document applies to all ASDAN courses and qualifications.

1.2 ASDAN's qualifications are regulated by Ofqual (England and international), CCEA (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales).

1.3 This policy supports ASDAN's obligations under the General Conditions of Recognition (Ofqual and CCEA) and the Standard Conditions of Recognition (Qualifications Wales), including requirements relating to malpractice and maladministration, the treatment of whistleblowers and regulatory notification.

1.4 This document is for the attention of:

- ASDAN trustees, staff and associate staff
- ASDAN centres, centre staff (including tutors, assessors, quality assurance staff and managers)
- Learners and their parents/carers (where appropriate)
- ASDAN's regulators: Ofqual, CCEA, Qualifications Wales
- Other stakeholders

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2. Policy

This policy applies to all regulated qualifications, as well as related products and services offered by ASDAN.

This policy enables individuals to raise concerns safely, confidentially, and without fear of detriment, where those concerns are in the public interest.

ASDAN is committed to maintaining the integrity of its courses and qualifications and to encouraging the reporting of genuine concerns about wrongdoing that may affect learners, centres, courses, qualifications, or public confidence in assessment and awarding.

2.1. Definition of Whistleblowing

For the purposes of this policy, whistleblowing is the raising of a concern about suspected wrongdoing, including the covering up of wrongdoing, that an individual becomes aware of through their work or involvement with qualifications. A whistleblowing disclosure is made in the public interest and concerns wrongdoing that has taken place, is taking place or is likely to take place.

2.2. Scope of Whistleblowing Concerns

Concerns raised under this policy may include (but are not limited to):

- Serious regulatory breaches
- Failures that could compromise integrity, security or standards of qualifications
- Dishonest or unethical practices
- Abuse of position or authority
- Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing

2.2.1 Malpractice and Maladministration

Concerns that relate to malpractice may be raised under this Whistleblowing policy, but the investigation and management of such concerns are set out in the ASDAN Malpractice and Maladministration policy, which provides definitions, reporting routes, and procedures.

2.2.2 Complaints and Appeals

Whistleblowing does not apply to complaints or appeals. Complaints generally relate to concerns about service delivery or administration, while appeals relate to decisions about assessment outcomes. These matters do not involve the reporting of serious wrongdoing in the public interest and are therefore managed separately.

ASDAN has a dedicated Complaints policy and a separate Appeals policy, each with its own reporting routes and procedures, which must be followed for those types of issues.

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2.3. Centre Responsibilities

Centres should:

- Have and maintain their own whistleblowing policy and arrangements that enable learners, staff and others to raise genuine concerns safely and without fear of detriment
- Make learners and staff aware of both the centre whistleblowing arrangements and the ASDAN whistleblowing policy
- Ensure that individuals are not prevented from raising concerns directly with ASDAN where they consider it appropriate to do so
- Not obstruct, discourage or attempt to influence whistleblowing disclosures
- Cooperate fully with ASDAN where a whistleblowing disclosure relates to the centre

2.4. ASDAN Responsibilities

As an Awarding Organisation, ASDAN will:

- Maintain and publish clear whistleblowing arrangements
- Investigate and respond to disclosures promptly and proportionately
- Take reasonable steps to protect whistle-blowers from detriment
- Keep appropriate records of disclosures and actions taken
- Notify the relevant regulator(s) where required
- Ensure whistleblowing concerns are handled independently from complaints, appeals or employment matters
- Accept anonymous disclosures and protect the identity of individuals who identify themselves, as far as reasonably possible

2.5 Confidentiality

ASDAN will endeavour to keep the identity of a person making a disclosure confidential, where asked to do so. However, by law or regulation, we may need to disclose their identity to:

- the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud);
- the courts (in connection with court proceedings);
- another person to whom we are required by law to disclose your identity;
- The national regulator responsible for the standards of the qualification(s) concerned.

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- A person making a disclosure should also be aware that they may be identifiable by others due to the nature or circumstances of the disclosure.

3. Procedure

3.1 Raising a Concern

Stage 1 – Raising concerns locally

Where appropriate and safe to do so, individuals are encouraged to raise concerns through the normal management or governance arrangements of the organisation concerned (e.g. a centre).

For learners, this would usually be their tutor or assessor.

Stage 2 – Raising concerns with ASDAN

If an individual does not feel able to raise concerns locally, the concerns cannot be raised safely, or they have not been adequately addressed, they can be reported directly to ASDAN using the ASDAN Whistleblowing Form, available on the ASDAN website.

Concerns should be submitted to quality@asdan.org.uk and should include:

- a clear description of the concern
- relevant dates, locations and individuals (where known)
- any supporting evidence available

Anonymous disclosures will be considered, although they may limit ASDAN's ability to investigate fully.

3.2 ASDAN Response Procedure

Stage 3 – Evaluation and action

Upon receipt of a whistleblowing disclosure, ASDAN will:

- acknowledge receipt of the concern
- evaluate the information provided
- request further information where necessary
- decide whether and how the concern should be investigated

Where contact details have been provided, ASDAN will acknowledge the disclosure within five working days and, where possible, provide information about the next steps.

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Where appropriate:

- the relevant regulator(s) will be informed where required, and any other awarding organisation will be informed where the matter may affect that organisation
- independent investigation or scrutiny will be arranged
- appropriate corrective or mitigating actions will be implemented

Within ten working days of the conclusion of the investigation ASDAN will provide a summary of outcomes, subject to confidentiality and data protection requirements.

4. Associated Documentation

- Appeals Policy
- Maladministration and Malpractice Policy
- ASDAN Whistleblowing Form