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responsibly in order to uphold the reputation of the University and maintain public confidence.

- 1.3 The University encourages members of staff and students to raise genuine and serious concerns about malpractice in the workplace at the earliest practicable stage. This policy sets out a process whereby employees and students who have concerns about malpractice may raise those concerns at a high level in the University, outside of normal line management, and without fear of detriment. The policy also seeks to balance the need to provide safeguards for members of staff and students who raise genuine concerns about malpractice against the need to protect other members of staff, students, members of the Board of Governors, and the University against uninformed or vexatious allegations.
- 1.4 This policy applies to disclosure by an employee, an agency contract worker, a self-employed homeworker employed or engaged by the University, or by a student at the University, who has grounds to believe that malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur in connection with the University, and that disclosure would be in the public interest. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'student' includes sabbatical officers of the Students' Union.
- 2.1 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects a worker from victimisation and dismissal following disclosure by that worker of a matter threatening the public interest, as long as the case satisfies the detailed conditions set out in the Act. To be protected, the worker must make a 'qualifying disclosure' and ensure that it is made in one of the ways described in the Act. Similarly, the University applies the same principle to its students where they may raise a 'qualifying disclosure' under this policy (see Section 4).
- 2.2 A disclosure made other than in accordance with the Act and this Policy, will not be protected under 'whistleblowing' legislation.



be motivated by personal antagonism and the worker must have a reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to disclose the matter.

3.3 Personal grievances and complaints are not usually covered by the Act.

3.4 The University of Lincoln already has in place policies and procedures relating to the conduct of its staff and students under its disciplinary and grievance processes, the Financial Regulations (including procedures for dealing with financial misconduct) and the bullying and harassment policy. Allegations of injustice, discrimination or other misconduct made against individuals should normally be raised under these established procedures. The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which this University's Whistleblowing policy is intended to reflect, relates to serious concerns about matters of public interest which may need, at least initially, to be investigated separately by senior managers with corporate responsibilities or by Governors of the University. Such matters could also be investigated under the Act.





- the whistleblower's Head of College or Head of Professional Services department;
- the Chief Executive Officer of the Student's Union;
- the Vice Chancellor, or;
- the Chair of the Board of Governors.

If for a particular reason none of these individuals are appropriate – for example if they are all involved in the matter being disclosed – the disclosure should be made to the Chair of the University's Audit Committee, in confidence, via the Deputy University Secretary.

Reportees' and relevant other individuals' contact details can be found at the start of this policy.

- 5.5 A reportee may decline to become involved on reasonable grounds. Such grounds include previous involvement or interest in the matter concerned, incapacity or unavailability or that the reportee is satisfied that a different reportee would be more appropriate to consider the matter in accordance with this policy. In such circumstances, the original reportee will arrange for an alternative reportee to actSh(

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sufficient evidence being found, to substantiate the allegation(s) of malpractice; or of reasonable doubt as to the whistleblower's reasonable belief about the alleged malpractice and/or about its relation to the public interest.

6.5 If the whistleblower is not satisfied with the reportee's decision, they may also refer the matter to the Ombudsman for the Public Interest (OPI) under section 21(1) of the Public Interest and Whistleblowing Commission Act 2007 (PIWBC Act).



- 8.1 If, having followed the procedure under this policy, the whistleblower is not satisfied with the outcome of any investigation or further action taken by the University, they may raise the matter on a confidential basis directly with the police, the Office for Students, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, a Member of Parliament or other appropriate public authority. Before taking any such action, it is recommended that the whistleblower informs the reportee. The reportee will advise the whistleblower on the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act relating to external disclosures, with support of the Deputy University Secretary (in confidence) where required.
- 8.2 The whistleblower may also raise the matter externally, as set out in the paragraph above, if they have reasonable grounds for believing that they will be subjected to a detriment as a result of making the disclosure, or that all the available reportees (including Governors) are involved in the alleged malpractice. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills' 'Whistleblowing: Guidance for Employers and Code of Practice' advises that:
- 8.3 The whistleblower may at any time disclose the matter on a confidential basis to a legal representative for the purpose of taking professional legal advice.