

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (Exams) 2025/26

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Policy Owner: Examinations Officer

centre

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY (Exams) (2025/26)

Approved/Reviewed By: Senior Leadership Team

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: September 2026

Key Staff

- Head of Centre: Ms D Piralic
- Senior Leaders: Ms H Victory / Mr J Priddle
- Exams Officer: Mrs S Brewster

Introduction

Whistleblowing at Ormiston Rivers Academy is encouraged and not penalised. Staff are expected to report any concerns regarding the conduct, administration or integrity of examinations and assessments.

The school aims to maintain an ethical and transparent examinations culture which encourages staff and students to report practices that could compromise the integrity, security or fairness of examinations and assessments.

In accordance with section 5.11 of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, the school will take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration and will report suspected or actual incidents to the relevant awarding body immediately.

Purpose of the Policy

- Encourage individuals to raise concerns regarding examinations and assessments
- Explain how concerns can be reported and investigated
- Provide details of external reporting routes where necessary
- Protect individuals raising concerns in good faith
- Promote integrity, fairness and compliance with JCQ regulations

The Whistleblower

A whistleblower is an individual who reports an actual or potential wrongdoing in the public interest. Workers making disclosures in good faith may be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Reporting Concerns

Concerns regarding examinations or assessments should initially be raised with a designated senior leader responsible for whistleblowing, the Head of Centre, or the Exams Officer where appropriate.

Where concerns involve senior leaders or the Head of Centre, concerns may be raised directly with the governing body, awarding organisation or Ofqual.

Examples of Malpractice

- Failure to comply with JCQ or awarding body regulations
- Breach of examination paper security
- Conduct undermining the integrity of examinations or assessments
- Improper use of access arrangements or reasonable adjustments

- Providing unfair advantage or disadvantage to candidates
- Fraud, corruption or unauthorised access to examination materials
- Senior leaders or staff overriding examination regulations
- Any conduct which could constitute malpractice or maladministration

Whistleblowing Procedure

- Concerns will be investigated by appropriately trained and experienced staff.
- Individuals reporting concerns will be supported appropriately.
- Every reasonable effort will be made to protect confidentiality and identity where requested.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where safeguarding or legal obligations require disclosure.
- Where concerns are not addressed internally, disclosures may be made directly to awarding organisations or Ofqual.

Exams Officer Professional Standards

The school recognises the professional responsibilities of the Exams Officer and will support staff where concerns arise regarding pressure to act contrary to JCQ or awarding body regulations.

Anonymity

Anonymous concerns may be more difficult to investigate if insufficient information is provided. However, all concerns will be considered seriously and investigated appropriately where possible.

Students

Students are encouraged to report concerns regarding malpractice, maladministration or breaches of examination integrity. Information relating to examination regulations and academic integrity will be communicated to students during their courses of study.

Information and Training

Relevant staff involved in examinations and assessments will receive appropriate training and updates relating to malpractice, whistleblowing procedures and JCQ requirements.