

Whistleblowing

1. The Purpose

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or unknowingly harbouring malpractice. The Forestry Commission has a duty to identify such situations and take appropriate measures to remedy them. By encouraging a culture of openness within the Forestry Commission, we can help prevent such situations arising.

2. The Principles

The principles of the policy are to:

- implement the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which was introduced to protect individuals who “blow the whistle” by reporting bad practice at work;
- provide a safe and supportive mechanism for anyone who is employed, or has previously been employed, by the Forestry Commission to raise any concerns they have about any aspect of our work; and
- enable an individual to raise any concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal, if they have a reasonable belief that they are making the disclosure in the public interest.

The Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure are intended to deter and detect wrongdoing. They do not replace any other Forestry Commission Policies and Procedures and are therefore separate from our Grievance Policy and Procedure and the right and responsibility to raise concerns under the [Civil Service Code](#) or Forestry Commission’s [Fraud Policy](#).

3. The Policy

3.1 Your responsibilities as an employee

You are expected to:

- make yourself aware of and understand this policy and the associated procedure;
- raise any concerns with your line manager, or someone else in your line management chain, at the point you develop concern; and
- allow the matter to be dealt with in line with the Whistleblowing Procedure, or under any other more appropriate procedure.

3.2 Your responsibilities as a manager

You are expected to:

- make sure that you and your team are aware of and understand this policy and the associated procedure;
- encourage open dialogue with your staff to enable them to raise any concerns with you; and
- liaise with the Head of Internal Audit so that matters may be dealt with under the Whistleblowing Procedure.

3.3 Human Resources responsibilities

Human Resources have responsibility for:

- giving advice and guidance on the application of this policy and the associated procedure;
- supporting and assisting managers and/or employees who report concerns under this policy and the associated procedure;
- working with the Head of Internal Audit so that matters may be dealt with under the Whistleblowing Procedure; and
- monitoring and reviewing this policy and the associated procedure in consultation with management and Forestry Commission Trade Unions.