



## IFE whistleblowing policy

This Policy Statement sets out the IFE's position on whistleblowing, together with guidance and advice ('support') available to members.

Whilst whistleblowing is not a legal requirement, the IFE believes that members should understand their professional obligations with respect to whistleblowing and know where to go to for support when they have a concern that they believe should be raised.

The IFE is committed to meeting its public benefit obligations to society. Developing a culture where individuals feel supported in raising a concern and speaking up in the public interest is part of meeting this commitment. The IFE is well-placed to guide and advise their members on this matter.

A 'concern' might be a fire safety matter, other safety related matter or an allegation of a breach of the IFE's [Code of Conduct](#) which may or may not relate to a safety issue.

This Policy Statement is complemented by Guidance on Whistleblowing for IFE members, available at [www.ife.org.uk/whistleblowing-guidance](http://www.ife.org.uk/whistleblowing-guidance)

### What is whistleblowing?

'Whistleblowing' is defined by the UK Whistleblowing Commission as 'the raising of a concern, either within the workplace or externally, about a danger, risk, malpractice or wrongdoing which affects others'.

The term 'concern' is used throughout this document as shorthand for any or all of these situations.

The general principles of this Policy Statement apply in whichever country a member is working.

The underlying law applicable to the individual or the employer may be the law of the country in which they are working, but if their contract of employment is made in England it will remain subject to English law. There are other combinations of circumstances which may create more complexity and in many instances both English and local law may be relevant.

### Support for whistleblowing

There are potentially serious public and personal consequences if a member does not raise a concern. For this reason, the Engineering Council expects the IFE to provide guidance for its members such that it is understood by them that appropriate support will be available should they raise a concern.



However, the IFE's charitable status prevents the IFE from providing members with representation in the event of action being taken against them by the state, their employer or any other organisation.

### **IFE policy for responding to a member raising a concern (whistleblowing):**

1. On receipt of any concern raised by a member the information provided will be treated in strict confidence. The initial assessment of the concern raised by a Member will be carried out by the IFE's CEO.
2. If the member believes a crime has been committed the IFE will advise the member to report their concern to the relevant law enforcement bodies. The IFE is not able to do this on the member's behalf.
3. If the member's concern relates to a situation placing persons at risk the IFE will advise the member to report their concern directly to the statutory authority with the ability to carry out the appropriate enforcement. The IFE is not able to do this on the member's behalf.
4. If the matter relates to an alleged breach of the IFE's Code of Professional Conduct (COPC), the IFE will ask the member raising the concern to provide sufficient information regarding the identity of the member who is alleged to be in breach and documented details of the alleged breach, including the reporting member's grounds for believing the COPC has been breached. When this is received the IFE Disciplinary Process will be triggered.
5. It is possible that the concern being reported relates to more than one of the above. In the event that the concern includes an alleged criminal offence, any due process in law takes precedence over the IFE internal procedure.
6. The IFE's guidance to members on whistleblowing makes members' obligations clear but also advises that a member can make a request to the IFE for 'peer support' in relation to the concern raised. On receipt of any such request the IFE will endeavour to locate a peer member to provide this support. The process of making these arrangements will include appropriate steps to ensure that there is no conflict of interest for the member providing the peer support in relation to the subject matter of the concern and that the 'reporting member' is happy with the peer member being proposed by the IFE before the name and contact details of the 'reporting member' is divulged to the 'peer member'.

### **IFE Competency and Ethics Committee**