

# Qualification Unit

This unit forms part of a regulated qualification.

**Unit Title:** Managing Concerns, Complaints and Whistleblowing

**Unit Reference Number:** H/652/0863

**Level:** Five (5)

**Credit Value:** Eight (8)

**Minimum Guided Learning Hours:** 45

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Understand frameworks for managing concerns and complaints	1.1 Analyse legal, regulatory and organisational requirements for managing concerns, complaints and whistleblowing
	1.2 Explain links between complaints, safeguarding and risk
2. Be able to lead effective responses	2.1 Analyse accessibility and transparency of systems in place to deal with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Concerns</li> <li>b) Complaints</li> <li>c) Whistleblowing</li> </ul>
	2.2 Assess own role in supporting staff to respond appropriately and compassionately
	2.3 Describe how they ensure timely investigation and resolution
3. Be able to use concerns and complaints to improve services	3.1 Analyse themes and trends of concerns, complaints and feedback
	3.2 Review the impact of implemented service improvements

Indicative Content	
LO1	AC1.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal and regulatory frameworks governing complaints and whistleblowing in adult social care</li> <li>• Duty of candour requirements and expectations for openness and</li> </ul>

	<p>transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing legislation, protections and organisational responsibilities</li> <li>• Organisational complaints and whistleblowing policies and procedures</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities of leaders and managers in managing concerns and complaints</li> <li>• Regulatory reporting requirements and escalation routes (including when to notify regulators or commissioners)</li> <li>• Approaches to remedies, redress, apologies and restorative responses following complaints and concerns</li> </ul> <p>AC1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding safeguarding thresholds and indicators</li> <li>• When concerns or complaints may indicate safeguarding risks or abuse</li> <li>• Relationship between complaints handling, risk management and quality assurance</li> <li>• Leadership responsibility for escalation, protection and multi-agency working</li> <li>• Using complaints data to identify emerging risks and systemic issues</li> <li>• Preventative approaches to reduce harm and recurrence</li> </ul>
LO2	<p>AC2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility of complaints and whistleblowing systems for individuals, families, carers and staff</li> <li>• Provision of clear information, support and advocacy</li> <li>• Transparency, openness and fairness in responding to concerns</li> <li>• Supporting individuals who may be reluctant to raise concerns</li> <li>• Proportionate, lawful management of persistent or unreasonable complaints</li> <li>• Reviewing effectiveness of systems to ensure trust and confidence</li> </ul> <p>AC2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership behaviours that promote compassionate and person-centred responses</li> <li>• Supporting staff confidence, competence and emotional resilience</li> <li>• Communication skills and emotional intelligence in handling concerns</li> <li>• Supervision, guidance and reflective support for staff involved in complaints processes</li> <li>• Creating a culture where concerns and whistleblowing are welcomed</li> <li>• Reflective evaluation of own leadership support and impact</li> </ul> <p>AC2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportionate and fair investigation approaches</li> <li>• Timescales, record-keeping and documentation requirements</li> <li>• Gathering evidence and maintaining confidentiality</li> <li>• Fair, transparent and defensible decision-making</li> <li>• Ongoing communication with complainants and whistleblowers</li> <li>• Escalation routes, outcomes and closure procedures</li> <li>• Leadership accountability for timely and lawful resolution</li> </ul>
LO3	<p>AC3.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting, recording and analysing complaints and feedback data</li> <li>• Identifying recurring themes, patterns and systemic issues</li> <li>• Root cause analysis techniques</li> <li>• Involving staff, individuals and partners in learning reviews</li> <li>• Governance oversight and reporting of learning from concerns and</li> </ul>

complaints

#### AC3.2

- Implementing service improvements in response to learning
- Monitoring effectiveness and sustainability of changes made
- Measuring impact on quality, safety and outcomes for individuals
- Communicating learning and improvements to staff and stakeholders
- Embedding learning through policy, training and supervision
- Continuous quality improvement cycles informed by concerns and complaints

## Assessment Requirements

This unit must be assessed in line with Open Awards' assessment requirements and Skills for Care & Development assessment principles. Assessment must be work-based and grounded in the learner's real work practice within an adult social care setting.

Learners must generate evidence that demonstrates full achievement of all learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria for each unit.

AC2.3 - Evidence should include anonymised complaint case chronologies that demonstrate leadership judgement, decision-making, communication and escalation.

AC3.2 - Assessment should demonstrate how learning from complaints and whistleblowing is communicated and embedded across the service.

While some knowledge evidence may be generated outside of the workplace, final assessment decisions must confirm that knowledge and understanding have been applied effectively in the real work environment, in line with Skills for Care expectations.

Assessment evidence may include a range of methods, selected to ensure validity and reliability, including but not limited to:

- Direct observation of practice in the workplace
- Reflective accounts demonstrating application of learning to practice
- Professional discussion to explore understanding, reasoning and decision-making
- Work-based documentation relevant to the learner's role (e.g. policies, procedures, plans, audits, reports)
- Witness testimony from managers, colleagues or relevant professionals
- Feedback from individuals, staff or partner organisations, where appropriate.

Where learning outcomes require demonstration of competence, direct observation of practice should form the primary source of evidence. Observation should normally take place in person in the learner's work setting.

All assessment evidence must be valid, authentic, current, sufficient and reliable, and clearly attributable to the learner. Assessors must ensure that evidence is fit for purpose, reflects the learner's role and level of responsibility, and demonstrates both knowledge and effective practice, where required.

Evidence must be clearly attributable to the learner and reflect their role, responsibilities and level of autonomy within the adult social care setting.

Confidential, sensitive or personal information must not be included in learner

portfolios. Such evidence may be referenced, anonymised or summarised in line with organisational policies, data protection legislation and Open Awards requirements.

Assessment decisions must be made by an appropriately qualified assessor and are subject to internal and external quality assurance in accordance with Open Awards policies and procedures and Skills for Care expectations.