CORE CONCEPT

Whistleblowing, Speak-Up and Code of Conduct Programme Management

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Technical depth: Practitioner · **Practical mode:** Case study

Introduction

Most organisations have a code of conduct and a hotline, yet misconduct still surfaces first through external auditors, the media or regulators rather than through their own channels. Employees doubt that reports will be handled fairly, managers mishandle disclosures, and investigations stall or expose the reporter to retaliation. This Core Concept course equips practitioners to build ethics and speak-up programmes that people trust and use, from the code itself through intake, triage, investigation and reporter protection. Participants work on case material from several sectors and leave with a Speak-Up and Conduct Programme Blueprint for their own organisation.

Course Objectives

- Assess an existing code of conduct and ethics programme against ISO 37301 and recognised programme quality principles
- Design reporting channels, intake and triage procedures aligned to the ISO 37002 whistleblowing management system guidelines
- Plan and conduct proportionate internal investigations following ISO/TS 37008 principles, from scoping to reporting
- Protect reporters and other involved parties through confidentiality controls and retaliation risk assessment
- Measure programme effectiveness and report conduct risk to senior management and the governing body
- Produce a Speak-Up and Conduct Programme Blueprint ready for approval by the governing body

Target Audience

- Ethics and compliance managers responsible for the code of conduct and the speak-up programme
- Managers who receive, triage or route whistleblowing reports and grievances
- Internal audit and risk managers providing assurance over conduct and integrity controls
- HR and employee relations managers handling misconduct cases and disciplinary outcomes
- Legal and governance managers advising on confidentiality, protection and case outcomes
- Investigation team leaders coordinating fact-finding into alleged wrongdoing

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Course Outline

Day 1: Ethics Programmes and the Speak-Up Landscape

- Integrity Risk Drivers and Cost of Misconduct Case Review
- ISO 37000 Governance Principles: Values, Integrity and Accountability
- Ethics and Compliance Programme Elements in ISO 37301
- Speak-Up Culture Diagnostic and Psychological Safety Survey
- Current-State Programme Maturity Self-Assessment

Day 2: Standards and Frameworks for Conduct and Whistleblowing

- ISO 37002 Whistleblowing Management System: Trust, Impartiality and Protection
- ISO 37002 Four-Step Process: Receive, Assess, Address and Conclude
- COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework: Control Environment and Integrity
- IIA Three Lines Model: Roles in Conduct Oversight
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises: Grievance and Remedy Expectations

Day 3: Building the Code, Channels and Case Handling

- Values-Based Code of Conduct Structure and Ethical Decision-Making Model
- Multi-Channel Reporting Design: Hotline, Web Portal and Line Manager Route
- Report Intake Form and Triage Matrix by Severity and Category
- Case Management Workflow and Audit Trail Requirements
- Conflict of Interest Declaration and Gifts and Hospitality Register

Day 4: Investigations, Retaliation and Programme Risk

- ISO/TS 37008 Internal Investigation Planning and Scoping
- Investigative Interview Planning with the PEACE Model
- Retaliation Risk Assessment and Reporter Protection Plan
- Anonymous and Malicious Report Handling Protocols
- Root Cause Analysis of Substantiated Cases Using the 5 Whys

Day 5: Case Work and the Programme Blueprint

- Procurement Kickback Allegation Case Study: Triage to Outcome
- Workplace Harassment Disclosure Case Study: Protection and Remediation
- Ethics Programme Metrics Dashboard Build: Report Rate, Substantiation and Closure Time
- Speak-Up and Conduct Programme Blueprint Drafting
- Board Briefing Rehearsal and Peer Challenge

Skills You Will Gain

- Ethics Programme Design
- Whistleblowing Case Management
- Report Triage and Escalation
- Internal Investigation Planning
- Retaliation Risk Management
- Conduct Risk Reporting
- Conflict of Interest Management
- Integrity Culture Assessment

Why Attend This Course

- Return to work with a Speak-Up and Conduct Programme Blueprint for your own organisation, already tested against peer challenge
- Handle a disclosure from first contact to closure without compromising the reporter's identity or the evidence
- Brief the board or audit committee on conduct risk with metrics they can act on
- Compare how organisations from other sectors and countries handle difficult reports and retaliation claims

Conclusion

A speak-up programme is judged by whether people use it and whether they are protected when they do. This course moves from the ethics landscape and the governing standards, through code design, reporting channels and case handling, to the investigations and retaliation risks where programmes most often fail. The final day turns that material into a Speak-Up and Conduct Programme Blueprint that participants take back to their governing body, giving them a structured basis for strengthening integrity and detecting wrongdoing early.