

## The Ace Academy Complaints Policy

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### 1. Policy Statement

The Ace Academy is committed to providing a high-quality, person-centred service to all students, families, schools, and professionals we work with. We recognise that, from time to time, concerns or complaints may arise. This policy outlines our commitment to handling complaints fairly, promptly, and transparently, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.

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### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Students and their families/carers
- Referring schools and agencies
- Staff and volunteers
- Members of the public who interact with our services

Complaints may relate to:

- The conduct or professionalism of staff
  - The quality or delivery of services
  - Safeguarding or safety concerns
  - Communication or administrative issues
  - Any aspect of our outreach, mentoring, or on-site provision
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### 3. Aims

- To provide a clear and accessible process for raising concerns or complaints.
  - To resolve complaints quickly, fairly, and informally where possible.
  - To ensure all complaints are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
  - To learn from complaints and improve our services.
  - To protect the rights and dignity of all parties involved.
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### 4. Guiding Principles

- **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be handled with discretion and in accordance with data protection laws.
  - **Impartiality:** Complaints will be investigated objectively and without bias.
  - **Accessibility:** Support will be provided to those who need help making a complaint (e.g., translation, advocacy).
  - **Non-retaliation:** No complainant will be treated unfairly as a result of raising a concern.
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### 5. Informal Resolution

Where possible, concerns should be raised directly with the staff member involved or their line manager. Many issues can be resolved quickly through open and respectful dialogue. If the issue is not resolved informally, or the complainant prefers a formal process, the following procedure applies.

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### 6. Formal Complaints Procedure

### Stage 1: Submitting a Complaint

- Complaints should be submitted in writing (email, letter, or online form).
- Complainants should include:
  - Their name and contact details
  - A clear description of the issue
  - Relevant dates, times, and people involved
  - Any supporting evidence

Complaints can be submitted to:

Email: **admin@theaceacademy.co.uk**

Post: **The Ace Academy,  
Suite 624,  
37 Westminster Buildings,  
Theatre Square,  
Nottingham,  
NG1 6LG**

### Stage 2: Acknowledgement

- The complaint will be acknowledged within **3 working days**.
- The complainant will be informed of the name and role of the person handling the complaint.

### Stage 3: Investigation

- A senior member of staff (not involved in the issue) will investigate the complaint.
- This may involve:
  - Interviews with staff or students
  - Reviewing records or communications
  - Visiting the site (if relevant)
- The investigation will be completed within **10 working days** where possible.

### Stage 4: Outcome

- A written response will be provided, outlining:
  - The findings of the investigation
  - Any actions taken or proposed
  - The right to escalate the complaint if unsatisfied

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## 7. Appeals Process

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome:

- They may request a review by a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Managing Director.
- This request must be made within **10 working days** of receiving the outcome.
- A final written response will be issued within **15 working days** of the appeal.

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## 8. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint relates to a safeguarding issue:

- It will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

- The DSL will follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
  - Where necessary, external agencies (e.g., social care, police) will be contacted.
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#### **9. Complaints Involving Staff**

- Staff involved in a complaint will be informed and given the opportunity to respond.
  - Complaints will be handled sensitively and in line with HR and disciplinary procedures.
  - Staff will be supported throughout the process.
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#### **10. Complaints from Students**

- Students are encouraged to speak to their mentor or a trusted adult if they are unhappy.
  - Complaints from students will be taken seriously and handled in a child-friendly, supportive manner.
  - Where appropriate, an advocate or parent/carer may support the student in making a complaint.
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#### **11. Record Keeping**

- All complaints and outcomes will be recorded and stored securely.
  - Records will include:
    - The nature of the complaint
    - Actions taken
    - Outcomes and follow-up
  - Complaints data will be reviewed termly to identify trends and inform service improvements.
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#### **12. Monitoring and Review**

- This policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.
  - Feedback from complainants and staff is used to improve the complaints process.
  - Lessons learned from complaints are shared (anonymously) to promote transparency and accountability.
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