



## Complaints Policy

This Complaints Policy should be read in conjunction with the Complaints Procedure.

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The levels of service that students, prospective students and applicants can expect from the Academy are outlined in course information and on the Academy's website. If a student, prospective student or applicant has a complaint relating to a specific issue regarding the delivery of teaching or other services provided by the Academy, then they should submit a complaint, following the formal complaints procedure.
- 1.2 Students will not be discriminated against or suffer any recrimination as a consequence of making a complaint. It is important however that students adhere to official procedures, as this will assist the Academy to deal with concerns as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- 1.3 This complaints policy is part of the Academy's process of quality review and improvement. Complaints are considered as useful feedback rather than criticism and are valued. Any comments about this policy should be referred to the Registrar.

### 2. Policy detail

- 2.1 Complaints may only be made by a person in direct receipt of a service delivered by the Academy (see also 2.6).
- 2.2 Complainants must submit complaints within the timescale stated within the complaints procedure. If there is a delay in submitting a complaint, the complainant may be asked to explain the reason for the delay, and the delay may be grounds for the complaint to be rejected. If significant time has passed, it may be difficult and/or impossible for a fair and proper investigation of the circumstances and detail of the complaint.
- 2.3 As far as possible complaints should be raised initially with the person responsible. Every effort will be made to facilitate early resolution and it should be possible for the majority of complaints to be resolved quickly and effectively at this informal level.
- 2.4 If a complaint is received by the Principal or a member of the Senior Management team, they will ensure that it enters the procedure at the appropriate point. If the complainant has made no attempt to resolve the matter at a local level, they may be advised to make recourse to an informal stage of the complaint initially.
- 2.5 The Academy's relationship is with the student, irrespective of who pays the student's fees. Therefore, students should also note that, under Data Protection legislation, the University cannot deal with third party complaints without the written permission of the student unless a third party has been formally authorised or instructed to act on a student's behalf (this includes complaints made by a student's parent(s) or spouse). Whilst correspondence will then be copied to the student (unless specifically directed to the contrary by the student), the University will only deal with the single individual authorised to act on the student's behalf in respect of a complaint.
- 2.6 Complaints cannot be made anonymously. If another person is named in a complaint, they have a right to know what is being alleged, and to know who is making the complaint. However, all complaints will be dealt with sensitively, in the spirit of conciliation, and as far as possible, confidentiality will be maintained.
- 2.7 The Academy expects that students will not engage in making mischievous, frivolous or vexatious complaints. If a complaint is deemed to fall into this category it will be rejected and the student will receive a written response outlining why. Students should also be aware that if they raise a complaint against a member of staff that is found to be vexatious or malicious, they may be liable to disciplinary proceedings.
- 2.8 Where a complaint involves alleged misconduct on the part of a staff member, it should be referred to an appropriate member of the Senior Management team. Students should be aware that where a serious allegation against a member of staff is made, the Academy may have a duty to investigate this, regardless of whether the student wishes to formalise their complaint.

- 2.9 Whatever the nature of the complaint, complainants can expect it to be dealt with promptly and fairly and in accordance with the Academy's policies and procedures. The time limits set out in the complaints procedure will normally be followed. However, where for good reason this is not possible, the complainant will be kept informed of progress.
- 2.10 Every complaint will be carefully considered and complainants will be told the reasons for any decision. The Academy hopes that the complaints policy will enable all complainants to find a satisfactory resolution to any problems. However, complainants should not expect that consideration of a complaint will always produce their preferred outcome.
- 2.11 A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued upon the completion of the internal complaints procedure.

### **3. Matters which are not covered by the Academy's Complaints Procedure**

- 3.1 Issues covered by other Academy policies cannot be dealt with under the Complaints Policy. For example, this policy cannot be used to appeal against a decision made under the Student Disciplinary Policy or by an Assessment Board. Appeals of any such nature can be made in writing to the following address:  
**Sharpe Academy, Harrow Arts Centre, 171 Uxbridge Road, Hatch End, HA5 4EA,**  
or by email to **Daniel@SharpeAcademy.co.uk**.
- 3.2 Complaints about services provided by other organisations should be directed to those providers for resolution.
- 3.3 Complaints about Sharpe Academy students will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure.