

# Complaints Policy



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**Signed:** Ruth Minhall

**Position:** CEO

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## Scope

At Tuition Extra, we have a culture of continuous improvement. We welcome compliments and complaints constructively and will always work hard to resolve any issues that may arise. This complaints policy is specifically designed for parents/carers, adult students, members of the public and other stakeholders.

Allegations relating to staff grievances, whistleblowing, data protection, safeguarding, child protection, abuse or staff conduct may be managed under separate safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

Your views are welcomed. In the spirit of true partnership between home, Tuition Extra and the community, you are encouraged to say what you think should go on within Tuition Extra. Tuition Extra aims for high standards but sometimes things can go wrong, or expectations are not met.

We recognise that sometimes things do not go as well as we would all like and parents, carers and members of the public may need to make a complaint or raise concerns they have with the Service. This policy guides you in what to do if this happens.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to enable complainants with disabilities, language needs or other support requirements to access this procedure.

## **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

If you have a complaint/issue about any situation concerning your child, you should address this with your child's tutor in the first instance. This communication can be done in person, by phone, by email or in a written letter. It is often best to pre- arrange a time to pop in if the complaint involves a longer discussion, so that adequate time can be allocated to listen to your concerns. Most concerns and issues can be dealt with immediately and resolved.

If you are not happy with the resolution, you may then ask to speak to a more senior member of staff who will in turn seek to address the issues.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Complaint Investigation**

If you are unhappy with the resolution to your complaint from the senior member of staff then you may decide to refer your complaint to the CEO, Ruth Minhall. You should outline your concerns, in writing, giving an overview of the actions to date. If you need support with this you may make an appointment to come in and make a verbal formal complaint, this will be with a member of staff who will record your concerns and ask you to check the accuracy of their record.

Resolution meeting: The CEO (or senior member of her team) will contact you by phone to discuss the matter within 7 days of your complaint. Arrangements will be made for you to come in to attend a meeting with them and any other relevant parties, the aim of the meeting is to resolve the issues as quickly as possible.

At the meeting, all parties will have time to discuss their concerns and suggest ways to resolve the matter, all parties in the meeting will make an agreement together as to an acceptable outcome. This agreement and any actions will be recorded in writing and you will be provided with a copy.

If the matter is complex, it might require investigation with other staff, students or parents/carers, before the resolution meeting. It is always intended that this investigation be concluded within 10 working days. If for any reason this time scale cannot be met the CEO will communicate this to the complainant, setting out the expected timescale would be set.

If the complaint is about the CEO then the complaint should be dealt with under Stage 3.

## **Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of the Stage 2 process, they may request that the complaint be considered by a Complaints Panel.

The request must be made in writing to the CEO (or, where the complaint

concerns the CEO, to the Human Resources Department) within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.

## **The Panel**

The Complaints Panel will consist of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of Tuition Extra. The purpose of the panel is to impartially review the complaint and the way it has been handled.

## **The Hearing**

The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date, time and location of the hearing. The complainant may be accompanied by a friend, advocate, interpreter or other representative if they wish. The hearing will normally be convened within 20 working days of the request being received.

The Panel will:

- Consider all relevant documentation and evidence.
- Allow all parties the opportunity to present their views.
- Ask questions where clarification is required.
- Determine whether the complaint should be upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.
- Consider whether any recommendations or actions are required.

## **Outcome**

The Panel will make its decision based on the evidence presented. A written record of the hearing, findings and any recommendations will be provided to the complainant, the person complained about (where appropriate), and the CEO within **10 working days** of the hearing.

The Panel's decision represents the final stage of Tuition Extra's internal complaints procedure.

## **External Escalation (DfE)**

After meeting with the CEO (or a senior member of her team), if the parent, carer or member of the public is still unhappy with the outcome then complaints may be referred to the Department for Education using the current process published on GOV.UK

If a complaint is not from a parent/carers of a student of the Service (an example being a member of the public) these should be made directly to the

CEO, preferably in writing.

All complaints will be recorded formally, by HR in a central log, which will indicate at which stage the complaint was resolved.

Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the complaint. Parents and members of the public may request details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding academic year. If, once the entire process has been followed in line with this policy, parents are not satisfied that their complaint has been handled properly, then representation should be made to the DFE via GOV.UK, using the on-line form under the section 'Taking the Complaint Further'.

Normally complaints should be made within six months of the incident, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

As a service which wholeheartedly supports restorative justice practices, it is our aim to resolve complaints and issues in a supportive manner which allows both parties to move on positively.

All complaints will be addressed using these embedded principles where appropriate.

## **Records**

A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, whether they are resolved at Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3, and of any action taken as a result of those complaints. Records will be retained in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection and Records Retention policies.