



Complaints Policy

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Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. The **Executive Steering Group** is responsible for approving this policy and monitoring its effectiveness. The Executive Steering Group is responsible for ensuring that staff are treated fairly and consistently in the application of this policy and procedure. The Executive Steering Group has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to the SCITT Director. The SCITT Director has specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and that procedures are followed

Purpose

Ripley ITT is committed to providing a high quality of training and experience. All partner schools are committed to this and engage with programme design, delivery and evaluation. Trainees are regularly asked for their evaluation and feedback on all aspects of the programme. However, we recognise that things can still go wrong and Trainees who are dissatisfied with an aspect of their training or experience on the programme have the right to complain. Trainee is a term used to refer to provider-led trainee, teacher apprentice and assessment only candidate.

Nothing in this policy is intended to form part of a contract between the SCITT and the Trainee. The SCITT may amend this policy at any time.

Scope

The following concerns or complaints are excluded from being dealt with under this policy:

- Safeguarding and child protection – this is to be raised and handled under the relevant school's child protection policy

- Academic Assessment Board – Trainee's must follow the Appeals Policy to raise an issue regarding determinations
- Disciplinary matters – these are subject to appeals procedures set out under the relevant policy
- Fitness to practice – these are subject to appeals procedures set out under the relevant policy
- PGCE module delivery – these are subject to the applicable University process

Any other complaints should follow the procedures below.

Procedures

Stage 1 - Informal: the matter should be raised promptly and informally in the first instance, with the relevant programme personnel. This may be a Professional Mentor on placement or the SCITT Director/Deputy Director, depending upon the reason for concern or complaint, whether it is a placement issue or other programme issue. A mediation or conciliation meeting may be provided whereby a third party who is independent of the complaint can help to resolve the problem. This may be a School Lead/Professional Mentor from a different partner school or the programme Link Tutor. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at this stage, but if it cannot be resolved, is very serious or the trainee remains dissatisfied after this stage then Stage 2 applies. It is for the SCITT to determine in its absolute discretion whether stage 1 has been exhausted.

Stage 2 - Formal: the complaint needs to be made in writing, within 5 school days of Stage 1 having been complete, to the SCITT Director using the Formal Complaint Proforma. The aim of the Complaint Investigation is to consider the complaint and outline findings to the trainee. An Investigating Officer, who has had no prior involvement in the matter, will be appointed and they will:

- Arrange to speak with the trainee to agree the key points for consideration.
- Consider the information provided by the trainee and any other material pertinent to the concerns. There may be discussions with other staff members (at the absolute discretion of the Investigating Officer) and consideration of procedures where appropriate.
- Compile a Complaint Investigation Report (CIR) which will be returned to the SCITT Director (within 10 school days of receipt of the formal complaint proforma) and then sent to the trainee along with information regarding any further steps s/he may wish to take.

It is for the SCITT Director to determine if each allegations made is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld. The SCITT Director may specify a remedy or action to be taken following the outcome of Stage 2.

Stage 3 - Review: the aim of a Complaint Review is to give further consideration to specific aspects of a complaint where there is evidence that a key point(s) has not been fully considered, not fully substantiated or appropriate remedy has not been offered.

A member of the SCITT's Executive Steering Group will review the complaint and may, as required:

- a) Contact the trainee to confirm and/or clarify the outstanding aspects of the complaint.
- b) Consider and review the actions and outcome of stage 2 and any relevant information/evidence.

- c) Discuss the complaint with the original Investigating Officer and SCITT Director, along with any staff who contributed to the initial investigations.
- d) Seek new information from the trainee, staff and/or documents if applicable.

The Stage 3 Reviewer will issue a letter to the trainee and SCITT director to confirm the outcome of stage 3. This concludes the internal complaints process.

Office of Independent Adjudicators

As an accredited provider of ITT Ripley ITT SCITT is a member of OIA. The OIA looks at complaints about the acts and omissions of its members. This includes complaints about service quality, course provision, academic appeals, disciplinary and fitness to practise procedures. In reviewing a complaint, the OIA will consider whether the provider has followed its own regulations and procedures, and whether it has acted reasonably in all the circumstances. The OIA cannot review complaints about academic judgment, admissions or student employment matters. **As a classic ombudsman scheme, the OIA is a complaints handler of last resort.** Normally, students must exhaust a provider's own internal processes before complaining to the OIA.

At the end of a procedure Ripley ITT SCITT must issue a Completion of Procedures Letter informing the trainee of their right to bring a complaint to the OIA.