



The Buckingham Partnership Complaints Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the procedure for addressing complaints. It is hoped that the vast majority of concerns should be handled successfully through discussion with the appropriate member of staff (Stage 1). Stages 2 and 3 provide a process for exceptional cases which require further investigation.

The application and procedure of this policy will not discriminate against any individual on the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other grounds protected in law (e.g. part-time worker status, trade union membership or HIV positive status).

Stage 1 – initial concerns

If you have any concerns about the Partnership or the training provided, please discuss the matter in the first instance with your mentor, Professional Tutor or one of the SCITT team. The Partnership considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved following discussion and a shared understanding of the issues. Please do not publicise any concerns you have on social networking sites in order that confidentiality is preserved.

Stage 2 – formal procedure

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion and you wish to have the matter formally investigated, please complete a complaint form (Appendix 1). If you would like help completing the form, the Partnership will be happy to provide the assistance of someone unconnected with the complaint. You will receive an acknowledgement of the receipt of your complaint form within 5 school (term-time) days.

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of the Partnership
- the interpretation of Partnership policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at the Partnership

it will be investigated by one of the Co-Directors of Partnership or a member of staff nominated by the Co-Director.

If the matter is about one of the Co-Directors of Partnership, then it will be investigated by the Chair of the SCITT Board or a Board Member nominated by the Chair.

If your complaint is about the Chair of the SCITT Board, your completed form should be returned to the Chair of Governors of the Royal Latin School.

The person carrying out the investigation will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the Partnership and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He/she will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 school (term-time) days of receiving the complaint. This will close Stage 2.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the result from Stage 2, you may choose to refer your complaint to Stage 3 of the procedure. This must be done in writing to the Partnership within 15 working days of the date of the letter which completed Stage 2.

At this stage the complaint will be considered by a panel comprising the SCITT Governor and two representatives of Partnership Schools, who will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the SCITT Board.

The panel will consist of professionals who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 school (term-time) days of your request, subject to the availability of panel members.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a Union representative/friend/partner if you wish, to put your case. The Co-Directors of Partnership will be given the same opportunities.

Outcome of the Panel Hearing

The panel will write to you with its conclusion within 5 school (term-time) days of the meeting, and its decision is final.

If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, via their website: <http://oiahe.org.uk/default.aspx>

Alternatively, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education, who can review whether the Partnership has acted reasonably and followed the correct procedures. The address is Department for Education, School Complaints Unit, Ministerial and Public Communications Division, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Unreasonably persistent complainants and unreasonable complainant behaviour

Unfortunately, in a minority of cases, people pursue their complaints in a way which can either impede the investigation of their complaint or can have significant resource issues for the Partnership.

These actions can occur either while the complaint is being investigated, or once the Partnership has concluded the complaint investigation.

In such cases, the Partnership will follow any advice from the Department of Education, the OIA and the Local Government Ombudsman.

Date of Policy: September 2016

Date of Review (with amendments) : September 2017

Signed:.....
(Chair of SCITT Board)

Signed copy held by The Buckingham Partnership

Appendix One - Complaint form

Please complete and return to the SCITT Office. We will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Name of trainee (if different):

Your relationship to the trainee (if appropriate):

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Email address:

Please give details of your complaint.

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response?)**

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: