



	Students, parents, employers, residents, schools
	Vice Principal
	Vice Principal
	May 2019

The college aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from students, parents and members of the community.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law

their son/daughter's tutor is they can contact the college reception on 0161 330 2330 or email contact@asfc.ac.uk who will provide this information.

The college will acknowledge an Expression of Concern within 5 college teaching days, and investigate and provide a response as soon as possible but within 20 college teaching days.

The Official Expression of Concern stage may involve a meeting between the complainant and the relevant Senior Manager, and/or the subject of the complaint, if appropriate.

The majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage, however, should the concern not be resolved, it will be escalated to Stage 2.

The formal stage involves the complainant putting the complaint to the Vice Principal of Curriculum and Planning and/or the subject of the complaint:

In a letter or by email.

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents. The complainant should also state what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the college reception on 0161 330 2330 or email contact@asfc.ac.uk.

The Vice Principal (or other Senior Manager appointed by the Vice Principal for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant as soon as possible but within 20 college teaching days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to proceed to the next stage of this procedure, they should progress to stage 3 in writing within 10 college teaching days.

Complaints will be escalated to the Centre Principal if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint at the second, formal stage.

Complaints will be escalated to the Company Secretary if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint at the third, formal stage.

The Company Secretary will then appoint a panel on behalf of the Academy Trust which must consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least 1 panel member must be independent of the management and running of the college. The panel cannot be made up solely of governing board members, as they are not independent of the management and running of the college.

The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress (see section 10).

The complainant must have reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; however, the review panel reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the complainant. At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the college, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish.

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The panel will be appointed as per the steps in stage 3 (set out in section 6 above) unless the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire governing board or the majority of the governing board, in which case a panel of independent governors will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from other local academies and/or the local authority, and will carry out the steps at stage 3 (set out in section 6 above).

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint
If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- Has made the same complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the college's complaints procedure
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive
- Knowingly provides false information
- Insists on pursuing a complaint that is unfounded, or out of scope of the complaints procedure
- Pursues a valid complaint, but in an unreasonable manner e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refused to co-operate with this complaints procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the time frames it sets out
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation goes on
- Makes a complaint designed to cause disruption, annoyance or excessive demands on college time
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes, or a solution that lacks any serious purpose or value

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns, and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

