

Policy 003: Complaints and Grievances Policy

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 This policy describes how the Academy of Contemporary Music (ACM) supports students who are engaging with and making use of the Student Complaints and Grievances.
- 1.2 This policy explains, in an open, transparent and accessible way, how ACM deals with student complaints and grievances.
- 1.3 Complaints against ACM made by students are treated seriously and, if found to be justified, are acted upon to ensure that our students' interests are protected.
- 1.4 Applicant complaints and grievances considered in line with the principles of this policy and the associated procedures.

2. Policy Statement

Student grievances and complaints

2.1 The guiding principles are that complaints shall be:

- a) treated seriously and with fairness;
- b) dealt with promptly, sensitively and at the appropriate level of ACM;
- c) treated consistently across ACM;
- d) progressed through two stages – an informal stage and, if necessary, a formal stage;
- e) dealt with and resolved, wherever possible, informally and with the least amount of disruption as is possible.
- f) without prejudice to a student's or group of students' right to pursue remedies outside ACM and the awarding body, having exhausted ACM and/or the awarding body's complaints procedures
- g) In order to be considered, any student complaint must be submitted no more than six calendar months after the event or problem relating to the complaint.

2.3 The procedures detailed below are designed for all other forms of student and applicant complaints.

2.4 It should be noted that the policy and its corresponding procedures are not designed to deal with problems such as:

- missing coursework;
- unexplained absence of a member of teaching staff;
- late return of work;
- issues with room booking/tutorial credits; or
- teaching room deficiencies except in so far that such concerns are not resolved through referral through to Programme Managers, or through feedback mechanisms such as Student Forums.

- applicant complaints about programme entry requirements, programme design and the curriculum.

2.5 These complaints procedures and any decisions made under them are not intended to give rise to legal rights, or obligations on ACM or its awarding bodies to pay compensation either in respect of a decision made pursuant to the procedures or for a breach of these procedures. This policy is intended to facilitate ACM to resolve grievances.

2.6 Anonymous complaints will not normally be considered.

2.7 If the student or applicant is not satisfied with the decision at the conclusion of ACM's Formal stage or if the recommendations made at this stage are not implemented, they may appeal in the first instance to ACM's awarding body for their programme, which will follow its own process, as noted in 2.8 below.

2.8 For information on the complaints policy of their relevant awarding body, students should refer to:

- a) Degree students: Student Complaints and Grievance Procedures, Middlesex University Regulations:
[Middlesex University Regulations: Complaints procedure](#)
- b) Diploma Students: University of the Arts London's Student Complaints Procedures:
[University of the Arts, London: Student Complaints Procedures](#)
- c) Diploma Students, where a grievance relates to funding: East Surrey College Complaints Procedure:
[East Surrey College Complaints Procedure](#)

2.9 For applicants, decisions made by the awarding institution will be final, in line with their regulations.

2.9 For relatively minor queries or complaints, students and applicants are encouraged to raise them in the first instance an appropriate member of ACM staff may be able to resolve the issue without needing to make use of these Student Complaints and Grievances Policy, and corresponding Procedure.

Group Complaints

2.10 ACM recognises that students may wish to lodge complaints collectively. In such instances students are asked to nominate one spokesperson with whom ACM staff will liaise to address the complaint. This spokesperson should endeavour to gather the views of all of the students who wish to lodge the complaint

Review of Admissions Decisions

2.11 Prospective students and applicants may utilise this Policy and Procedure during the admission and auditions process, up to and including point of an offer being made. Students may utilise ACM's Complaints and Grievances procedure to request a review of the admissions decision and the process followed and completed in issuing an offer of study.

2.12 Prospective students will be signposted in writing to this policy during the auditions process and at point of offer.

3. Responsible Parties

3.1 The policy lead is responsible for the cyclical monitoring and review of the policy in liaison with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. The Student Complaints and Grievances Policy lead is:

- Head of Quality and Student Experience

3.2 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Policy will be authorised by the following designated staff:

- Registry Manager
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
- Group Head of Education
- Head of Student Services
- Programme Managers
- Senior Management, including Executive Senior Management.

4. Reference Points

4.1 Internal Documents

- Academic Appeals
- Academic Integrity
- Admissions
- Student Disciplinary
- Equality and Diversity

4.2 External Documents

- Middlesex University Regulations: Student complaints and grievance procedures
- University of the Arts, London: Student Complaint Procedures
- East Surrey College: Client Feedback Policy
- QAA Quality Code, Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints

5. Date of Approval and Next Review

Version: 1.2
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