



LONDON INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

General Principles

All complaints will be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible. The length of the period will vary with the gravity and complexity of the complaint and the urgency with which it needs to be settled. However, the intention is that all complaints should be settled within a period which is reasonable in all the circumstances.

All complaints, received, including those ultimately resolved at an informal stage, should be recorded by a member of LISC's management team. The outcome of the complaint shall also be recorded, together with reasons for that decision, the outcome falling into one of the following categories:

- ✓ Complaint resolved informally
- ✓ Complaint dismissed
- ✓ Complaint to be dealt with under another procedure
- ✓ Complaint upheld and the appropriate action is deemed to be one off

- 1) counselling
- 2) training
- 3) general supervision
- 4) other management action

Urgent complaints will be identified as such and given priority.

All complaints will be investigated fully, fairly and carefully and complainants will be kept informed of progress during, as well as at the end of each stage.

The main aim at all stages will be to secure that either the complaint is settled or that a decision is taken about the complaint and it can then, if required, proceed to the next stage.

STAGES

The arrangements set out two levels at which a complaint could be considered. These are the informal stage and the formal complaint to the Principals. A complaint could be considered at both of these stages if necessary.

INFORMAL STAGE

Many minor complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away through the class teacher, Educational Secretary or Academic Co-ordinator depending upon the nature of the complaint. This is where the procedure should start and unless there are exceptional circumstances there should always be full discussion at the informal stage.

If the complaint has not been resolved at the first meeting, the parent should contact the Principal. The complaint may be made verbally or in writing. The Centre, if asked, will help anyone who would like assistance to set out their complaint, including

access to translation services where necessary. An appointment is likely to be necessary, so that the Principal (Complaints Officer) can give the matter his/her full attention. If the complaint is against the Principal, the Principal should nominate the other Principal or another senior person to attempt to resolve the complaint informally.

FORMAL STAGE

If a senior member of staff, cannot resolve the complaint informally, the Centre undertakes to deal with the complaint as follows:

- ✓ formally acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days
- ✓ tell the complainant the name and telephone number of the person looking into the complaint. This will generally be the Complaints Officer, unless the complaint is against
- ✓ the Complaints Officer, in which case the Principal shall appoint another person to look into the complaint
- ✓ respond to it within 20 working days or if this is not possible
- ✓ answer telling the complainant what is being done to investigate and how long it is expected to take

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant should contact the Principal.

The Principal **will initially attempt to resolve the complaint informally** and may contact an outside agency, and may call in a mediator, for advice.

If after this meeting an agreement cannot be reached, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. He/she can hold separate meetings with the Principals and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice she gives.

When the mediator has concluded his investigations, a final meeting between the parent and the Principals is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Parents may approach the British Council or any other accrediting body directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there is thought to be a possible breach of the study centre's registration requirements, it is essential to involve the British Council as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the latest legislation is adhered to.

If a student appears to be at risk, we follow the Safeguarding procedures in our local authority (see Child Protection Policy).

Records

A record of complaints against our study centre and/or the students and/or the adults working at the centre is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints File which is available for parents, ISI, UKBA and British Council or any other accrediting body inspectors on request.

If a tutor has a complaint regarding a colleague, the complaint will be formally logged, both parties will be given the opportunity to put their case forward, in the presence of a Principal.

In the event of a parent verbally abusing or accusing a tutor of misconduct, the tutor will complete a written statement detailing the incident. This will be investigated by the senior management team.

External Advice

Should a complaint not be reviewed by the LISC administration in a satisfactory manner, the matter may be brought to the attention of English UK which LISC is a member of, or the British Council, the accrediting body for the Centre, or the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) who is the appointed Educational Oversight Body.