

## Complaint Policy

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	All stakeholders
CATEGORY:	Governance and Compliance
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY:	Managing Director
POLICY MONITORED BY:	Operations Team
REVIEWED BY:	Managing Director
EFFECTIVE DATE:	03/02/2025
REVIEW DATE:	03/02/2026 or as required

This policy provides guidelines for handling concerns and complaints. The procedures set out below may be adapted as appropriate to meet the policy aims and circumstances of each case.

Separate procedures apply in the event of a child protection issue or if the Senior Management Team asks a student to leave and that student's parents seek a review of that decision. A concern about the safety of a student should be notified immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a concern or complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level; and that the concern or complaint is resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is good practice; is fair to those concerned; and it helps to promote tutors', staff, parents' and students' confidence in our ability to safeguard and promote welfare. We will try to resolve every concern or complaint in a positive way.

The term 'parents' refers to the parents of a current or prospective student, or, the legal or educational guardian of a current or prospective student.

### General complaints

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. We recognise that a difficulty which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, which could be damaging to relationships. Tutors, staff, parents, and students should never feel, or be made to feel, that a complaint will be taken amiss or adversely affect a student or their opportunities on the course. This policy however distinguishes between a concern or difficulty which can be resolved informally (Stage 1) and a formal complaint which will require investigation (Stages 2 and 3).

## **Timescales**

We aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner. Timescales for each stage are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. The term 'working days' can be defined as business hours, from Monday to Friday. These procedures need to be applied with common sense and judgement. If a complaint is raised during course time, the complainant cannot expect the timescales below to be strictly adhered to, although every reasonable effort will be made to address the complaint in a timely manner.

## **Confidentiality**

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at Stage 1, Stage 2, or Stage 3. Correspondence, statements, and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential. However, the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure will be supplied to tutors, staff, parents and students upon their request.

## **Stage 1 - An Informal Complaint**

Anyone who has a concern or difficulty is encouraged to discuss this informally with the Operations and Course Director or the Residential Manager in the first instance. Most complaints can be successfully resolved at this stage.

We expect most concerns, where a parent, tutor, staff member or student seeks intervention, reconsideration or some other action to be taken, can be resolved informally. Examples might include: dissatisfaction about some aspect of teaching or pastoral care; dissatisfaction about allocation of privileges or responsibilities; timetable issues; an invoicing error; or concerns about the performance of some other aspect of the organisation's systems or equipment.

## **Acknowledgement**

We will acknowledge a written notification by telephone, fax, e-mail, or letter within two working days of receipt.

## **Unresolved Concerns**

A concern which has not been resolved by informal means within 15 working days should be notified in writing as a formal complaint which will be dealt with in accordance to Stage 2 below.

## **Stage 2 - A Formal Complaint**

If an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter, it can be raised as a formal complaint to ProEd in writing addressed to the Operations and Course Director.

## **Notification**

An unresolved concern under Stage 1, or a complaint which needs investigation, or a specific dissatisfaction with some aspect of ProEd policies, procedures, management, or administration should be set out in writing with full details. This should be sent with all relevant documents and the full contact details of the complaint in an email or letter addressed to the Operations and Course Director.

## **Investigation**

The Operations and Course Director may request additional information from the complainant and to others who have knowledge of the circumstances. The complainant will be notified of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons for that outcome. Confidential written records will be kept of all correspondence.

## **Outcome**

The Operations and Course Director will aim to inform any complainant of the outcome of an investigation and the resolution to the complaint within 28 working days from the receipt of the complaint.

## **Stage 3 - Further Steps**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome and the Operations and Course Director's decision, then the complaint can be renewed in writing to the Managing Director. Complainants are invited to follow the procedure below:

## **Notification**

A complainant should write to the Managing Director within five working days of receiving the outcome of the complaint.

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27 Old Gloucester St, Holborn, London, WC1N 3AX

The letter to the Managing Director should give full details of the complaint and enclose all relevant documents and full contact details of the complainant. The letter will normally be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within four working days, indicating the action that is being taken and the likely time scale.

## **Action by the Managing Director**

The Managing Director will arrange for the complaint to be investigated. When they are satisfied that they have established all of the material facts and relevant policies, they will notify the complainant in writing of their decision and their reasons for it. They will aim to provide a response within ten working days of receipt of a letter of complaint.

## Student complaints

### Timescales

ProEd acknowledges the importance of addressing student complaints in a timely and effective manner. This policy will be applied with flexibility and sound judgment to ensure that each complaint is managed appropriately and with due consideration to the individual circumstances.

**Any student complaints that suggest a potential health and safety concern, a risk to student welfare within the programme, or a situation that may have placed, or could place, a child or vulnerable adult in danger will be addressed immediately. ProEd is committed to taking swift and appropriate action to ensure the protection of all individuals involved.**

### Confidentiality

A written record will be kept of all complaints and their resolution. Correspondence, statements, and records relating to grievance matters will be kept *confidential*.

Students can be assured that raising a complaint will not affect their standing in the programme or influence the attitudes or actions of teaching or administrative staff towards them. ProEd recognises that concerns about potential reprisals may discourage students from voicing their complaints, and we want to reassure all students that their privacy and rights will be fully respected throughout the process.

Confidentiality will only be breached in exceptional circumstances, such as when safeguarding concerns arise that require immediate action in accordance with legal and regulatory obligations.

**The below steps should be followed by any student who has a complaint:**

### Stage 1 - Share Your Concern

If you have a concern, it is best to share it as soon as possible. Problems should be resolved promptly, fairly and as directly as possible. The Operations Director and Course Director will be happy to see you to discuss any concerns you would like to raise. If you feel more comfortable talking to an alternative senior member of staff, then do raise the concern with them so that they can relate the details of your concern to the Operations Director and Course Director on your behalf.

### Stage 2 - Raise a Formal Complaint

It may be the case that your concern is of such a serious, detailed or delicate nature that you would prefer to write out an explanation of your concern. In many cases, writing down the nature of your concern, including details and the resolution you desire can be very helpful toward the process of resolving the concern. After writing down your concern please give it to the Operations Director and Course Director.

It is not necessary to formally raise a concern in writing for it to be taken seriously; concerns raised orally or in an informal note or email will be given due attention.

## **Investigation**

The Operations Director and Course Director will investigate the facts and potential solutions to your concern.

## **Meeting**

Once your concern has been raised and investigated, you will be invited to a meeting with the Operations Director and the Course Director to discuss the matter in detail. You will be informed in advance of the meeting's date, time, and location. Unless the complaint relates to a very serious issue, the meeting will be scheduled at a time that does not conflict with your classes.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide you with a supportive environment where your concerns can be fully heard and addressed. If you feel more comfortable, you are welcome to bring one person with you for support—this can be a friend, parent/guardian, or a member of ProEd staff.

If you have not already provided a written summary of your concerns, you may be asked to do so prior to or during the meeting to ensure clarity and accuracy. Any minutes or notes taken during the meeting will be shared with you and, if applicable, your parent/guardian.

A copy of these records will be securely stored by ProEd and will remain confidential in accordance with our data protection policy.

## **Decision**

During the meeting, the Operations Director and Course Director will work with you to make informed decisions and develop an actionable plan to ensure that your complaint is effectively addressed.

The proposed solutions will aim to resolve your concerns while also considering the broader needs of ProEd, including safeguarding the rights of other students and respecting the responsibilities and requirements of tutors and staff.

An action plan will be agreed upon during the meeting, including clear steps, timelines, and responsibilities for addressing your complaint. The plan will outline specific actions to be taken, along with key dates for follow-up to monitor progress and ensure a satisfactory resolution.

To ensure that your concerns are being addressed appropriately, the Operations Director and Course Director may schedule follow-up meetings as needed. These follow-ups provide an opportunity to review progress, make any necessary adjustments, and confirm that the agreed solutions are being implemented effectively.

## **Stage 3 - Appeal**

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, you may appeal the decision by notifying the Managing Director. At this point, it will be necessary for you to write down the nature of your complaint, and the reasons why you would like to appeal the outcome of your meeting with the Operations Director and Course Director.

The Managing Director will investigate your complaint and invite you to attend a further meeting. You may be accompanied by one person for support. At this point, ProEd may also wish to invite your parents/guardians to the meeting.

### **Outcome**

After the appeal meeting the Managing Director will either uphold or nullify the decision taken earlier by the Director of Operations and Course Director. You will be notified in writing of the Managing Director's decision, and if they have reached a different conclusion the terms of their decision will be set out. You should expect to find:

- What steps ProEd will take to address your complaint.
- An estimated timeline for review of those steps.

## **7. Record Keeping**

ProEd is committed to ensuring that all student complaints are resolved promptly and in a manner that is perceived to be fair, transparent, and constructive in improving the overall learning environment. To facilitate this, meticulous records are maintained at every stage of the complaint resolution process to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Record-Keeping Procedures:

- A record is created for every complaint received, documenting key details and the nature of the concern.
- Each stage of the resolution process is carefully documented, including dates, actions taken, and individuals involved.
- All records are securely stored and treated confidentially in line with ProEd's data protection policies.