

# Complaints Policy and Procedure

## Policy

### 1) Introduction

Yarlside Teaching School Alliance (YTSA) are committed to providing a high quality experience for all its customers, through its teaching and its range of professional support services. It encourages a positive environment in which informal contact and feedback from customers is welcomed and where complaints can be dealt with effectively.

The complaints procedure outlines the processes to be used when a customer has cause for concern.

### 2) Aims of the Policy

- To provide a clear framework to help anyone who is not satisfied with YTSA's services to raise their concerns and to ensure that YTSA responds effectively.
- To ensure that YTSA has systems in place to make improvements happen as a result of a complaint
- To encourage prompt resolution at an early informal stage.
- To ensure that all complaints are dealt with seriously, fairly and sensitively, with no resultant victimisation of the complainant.
- To raise awareness of the policy and procedures and ensure that staff understand the process through appropriate training.
- To define responsibilities and allocate duties to individual members of the teaching school staff in relation to the procedures set out.

### 3) Scope

This document should be used by anyone who wishes to formally complain about our services, including course attendees, employers, schools, partners and other users.

There are separate procedures for:

- Those wishing to feedback (comment, compliment or make suggestions) on our services. They should use the YTSA feedback systems found on our website [www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](http://www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk) or by emailing [info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)

## Complaints Policy and Procedure

### Procedure

#### 1. Informal Complaints

- 1.1. It is hoped that most complaints can be dealt with using the informal procedure.
- 1.2. Concerns should be raised in the first instance with the person or area concerned as soon as possible, and not later than three months after the incident. If appropriate, a meeting will be offered between the person complaining and the area they are complaining about to arrive at an agreed resolution.
- 1.3. If a complaint is about a member of staff it should be referred to the Teaching School Director
- 1.4. If delegate reports a problem with a venue (e.g. broken furniture) this should be reported to the course tutor who will refer this onto the Teaching School Business Support Manager
- 1.5. At this informal stage complaints may be made in person, by phone or by email
- 1.6. All informal complaints, even when satisfactorily resolved, should be forwarded to the Quality Team to be logged.

#### 2. Formal Complaints

Where complaints are very serious or the matter has not been resolved informally, the complainant should raise a formal complaint under the following procedure.

Complaints made more than three months after the incident will not normally be investigated

- 2.1. **Filling out a complaints form:** the complainant should fill out a Complaints Form (Appendix 1) having read the Complaints Policy and Procedure (available from the Teaching School or website [www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](http://www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)). The form should be returned to Yarlside Teaching School Alliance, Redoak Avenue, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 0LH or by email to [info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)
- 2.2. All complaints received directly by a member of staff should be passed on immediately to the Quality Team to ensure proper response.
- 2.3. **Acknowledgement:** The Quality Team sends an acknowledgement (normally within 5 working days), stating who will be investigating the complaint and that a response will be provided within 20 working days.
- 2.4. **Logging** the complaint: the Quality Team maintains a spreadsheet of all complaints and their progress.
- 2.5. **Investigation** of the complaint: the Quality Team forwards the complaint (with an Investigation Form Appendix 2, clearly identifying timescales) to the most appropriate senior member of staff, normally the Teaching School Director. An independent manager/Head of School may be asked to conduct the investigation if appropriate. During this stage the complainant may be contacted for further information or to be invited to meet with the investigating manager (They may be accompanied by a friend or family member. An accompanying person cannot take an active part in the proceedings but can offer support to the complainant).
- 2.6. **Resolution:** the investigating manager will consider the complaint thoroughly and will return the completed investigation form to the Quality Team.

The investigation manager will make a judgement based on evidence gathered and will decide to:

- Dismiss the complaint as unfounded, giving reasons
- Uphold or partially uphold the complaint, propose an amicable settlement, take appropriate steps to address the issue and to avoid a similar problem arising in future.

The investigation outcome will normally be communicated to the complainant by the Teaching School Director (or relevant person nominated by the Teaching School Director), a copy of the letter will be filed by the Quality Team.

- 2.7. **Quality improvement:** the investigating manager will ensure that relevant action is taken to change procedures or implement staff training to prevent recurrence of the complaint.

- 2.8. **Monitoring** the complaint: the Quality Team will monitor all logged complaints to ensure that they are resolved within the allotted 20 working days. A member of the Quality Team will inform the investigating manager or any unresolved complaints and will notify the complainant if they are unable to meet the agreed timescale.
- 2.9. **Evaluation:** a record of complaints, appeals and outcomes will be recorded on a complaints database. These will be analysed, summarised and presented to all department heads to ensure actions are carried out to address the issues raised.

### 3. Appeals

- 3.1. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response they received as an outcome of the investigation, they may appeal to the Head Teacher of Yarlside Academy (within 20 working days of the date on the response letter).
- 3.2. The appeal should be made in writing stating the reasons for the appeal and any action they are seeking.
- 3.3. The Head Teacher will investigate the complaint and decide to:
  - Uphold the original decision/dismiss the complaint as unfounded.
  - Uphold or partially uphold the complaint, recommend appropriate steps are taken to address the issue and to avoid a similar problem arising in future.
  - Invite the complainant to attend an appeal hearing (they may be accompanied by a friend or family member (An accompanying person cannot take an active part in the proceedings but can offer support to the complainant)).
- 3.4. A written notification of the result of the appeal will normally be sent within 20 working days of the Teaching School receiving the appeal, or within 5 working days of an appeal hearing.
- 3.5. The decision of the Head Teacher is final.
- 3.6. The Head Teacher may delegate responsibility for the appeal to the Teaching School Director providing they have not previously been involved with the case.



## Complaints Form

Before completing this form, you should read Yarlside Teaching School Alliance's Complaints Policy and Procedure, available on our website ([www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](http://www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)) or at the Teaching School. A summary is included on the reverse of this form.

When completed, please hand into Reception or send to: The Quality Team, Yarlside Teaching School Alliance, Redoak Avenue, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 0LH or by email to [info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)

### Section 1: Personal details

NAME:

COURSE:

ADDRESS:

TEL NO:

DECLARATION: I have read and understood Yarlside Teaching School Alliance's Complaints Policy and Procedure

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SIGNATURE

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DATE [DD/MM/YYYY]

Have you raised this issue informally?

If 'YES', please provide details of the outcome

YES

NO

### Section 2: Details of complaint

Details of complaint:

(what is the reason for your complaint, please give locations, names of others (including staff) involved)

How would you like this complaint to be resolved?

For office use: Date of complaint logged DD/MM/YYYY

## HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

This form is for formal complaints only. If you wish to feedback on our services (comment, compliment or make a suggestion) please email [info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)

### Stage 1: Informal complaint

Where possible, complaints should be raised immediately with the member of staff most directly concerned, the aim being to resolve the problem directly and informally at the earliest opportunity.

### Stage 2: How to make a formal complaint

If you find that stage 1 does not solve your problem, or you feel it is of a serious nature, you should make a formal complaint by completing this Complaints Form and returning it to the Quality Team at Yarlside Teaching School Alliance, Redoak Avenue, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA13 0LH or by email to [info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:info@yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)

You will receive an acknowledgement within 5 working days, and following an investigation into your complaint, we will send a full response within 20 working days of receiving your complaint (unless you are informed otherwise).

### Stage 3: How to appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive, you may (within 20 working days of the date on your response letter) appeal to the Head Teacher in writing, stating your reasons and any action you are seeking. Please ask the Quality Team for contact details. You will be notified in writing of the result of your appeal (normally within 20 working days of the Teaching School receiving your appeal). The decision of the appeal panel is final.

For a full copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedure please contact Yarlside Teaching School Alliance or refer to the website [www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk](http://www.yarlsideteachingschool.co.uk)