Complaints Policy for Maidenehead Tutorial College
2025 - 2026

Introduction

Maidenhead Tutorial College aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is committed to providing a high-quality, safe and supportive educational service throughout the complaints process. This policy sets out how complaints relating to any aspect of the centre, its staff, facilities or services will be managed in a clear, fair and consistent manner.
The complaints procedure is designed to be straightforward, impartial and non-adversarial. It allows for a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality and ensures that appropriate outcomes and remedies are provided where necessary. Any individual, including parents/carers, students, staff members or members of the public, may raise a complaint about the services provided by Maidenhead Tutorial College.

We recognise that complaints are often raised at times of stress or concern. We aim to work constructively with complainants wherever possible, using the process to resolve issues, learn from feedback and improve practice. Complaints may be resolved or withdrawn at any stage of the procedure.
Unless stated otherwise, the Centre Director will be the first point of contact when following this complaints procedure.
This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Grievance Policy.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Immigration Act 2016
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Ofsted requirements for organisations on the voluntary childcare register

The policy also reflects the following guidance:

- DfE (2019) *Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures*
- ESFA (2015) *Creating an academy complaints procedure*
- HM Government (2016) *Code of Practice on the English language requirement for public sector workers*

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction about an action taken, or a lack of action, by the centre or its staff.
- A **concern** is an expression of worry or doubt where reassurance or clarification is sought. For the purposes of this policy, concerns will be addressed as complaints.
- A **grievance** is an issue raised by a member of staff relating to employment matters and will be dealt with under the centre's Grievance Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Complainant

- The complainant is expected to:
- Raise concerns as soon as possible
- Clearly explain the nature of the complaint and desired outcome
- Cooperate with the investigation process
- Respond promptly to requests for information
- Treat all individuals involved with respect

The Complaints Coordinator (Centre Director)

The Complaints Coordinator will:

- Oversee the complaints process and keep all parties informed
- Ensure the procedure is followed fairly and consistently
- Maintain accurate and confidential records in line with data protection requirements
- Be mindful of confidentiality and third-party information
- Consider any reasonable adjustments or additional support required by the complainant

Summary of the Complaints Process

- Stage 1 – Informal Resolution: 2–3 working days
- Stage 2 – Formal Complaint: up to 15 working days
- Stage 3 – Appeal: must be submitted within 30 days of the Stage 2 outcome

Stage 1 – Informal Concern

In the first instance, concerns should be raised directly with the relevant member of staff, either in person, by telephone, in writing or via email. Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally at this stage.

If the concern relates to a member of staff, the Centre Director may be contacted for support. If the concern relates to the Centre Director, it should be raised with the Managing Directors.

Brief notes of discussions will be kept securely. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, the complaint may progress to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint
Formal complaints should be submitted to the Centre Director using the appropriate complaints form where possible. The complaint will be acknowledged and investigated within 15 working days. Where this is not achievable due to complexity, the complainant will be informed in writing of revised timescales.

The investigation may include:

- Meetings with the complainant (who may be accompanied)
- Interviews with relevant staff or students
- Review of relevant records or evidence

A written outcome will be provided, setting out findings and any actions to be taken. If the complaint is against the Centre Director, it should be submitted directly to the Managing Directors.

Stage 3 – Appeal
If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may appeal in writing to the Managing Directors within 30 days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome. The appeal will be reviewed by a suitably independent person or panel, and a final written response will be issued.

Making a Complaint
Complaints may be made in person, by telephone, in writing, via email or through a third party. Complaints should normally be raised within 12 months of the issue arising, although exceptions may be considered. Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated, unless the Centre Director determines that there are exceptional circumstances.

Recording and Confidentiality
A written record will be kept of all complaints, including:

- The issues raised
- Findings and outcomes
- Actions taken, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld

Records are stored securely and may be made available to inspectors or regulatory bodies upon request. Information will not be shared with third parties without consent, unless required by law.

Outcomes
Where a complaint is upheld in whole or in part, outcomes may include:

- An explanation or clarification
- An apology
- Actions to prevent recurrence
- Review or amendment of policies or procedures

Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and Exclusions

Complaints relating to safeguarding or child protection concerns will be managed in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may be referred to the appropriate external agencies. Staff whistleblowing concerns are addressed through the Whistleblowing Policy. Staff grievances and disciplinary matters are handled under separate internal procedures.

Managing Unreasonable Complaints

Maidenhead tutorial college is committed to managing complaints fairly while also protecting staff from unacceptable behaviour. A complaint may be considered unreasonable if it is persistently repetitive, abusive, aggressive, or seeks unrealistic outcomes after the procedure has been completed.
Where concerns about unreasonable behaviour arise, the Centre Director will attempt to resolve matters informally before applying any restrictions. If necessary, communication methods may be limited through a written communication plan, reviewed after six months.
A decision to cease responding will only be taken where all reasonable steps have been exhausted and the complainant has been informed of the centre's position and available options. Serious incidents of aggression or threats may be referred to the police and may result in restrictions on access to the premises.

Suspension of the Procedure
If external investigations or legal proceedings are underway, the complaints process may be suspended until those matters are concluded. The complainant will be informed in writing where this applies.

Complaints Procedure Form
If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve your complaint and wish to take the matter further, please complete the below form and send it to the Centre Director. (If your complaint is against the centre director, you will need to send the form to the managing director):
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Sharon@maidenheadcollege.co.uk
Edward@maidenheadcollege.co.uk
Sophie@maidenheadcollege.co.uk

Name: Address:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Email: Postcode:

What is your complaint concerning, and what action would you like the organisation to take?

When did you discuss your concern/complaint with the appropriate member of staff?

What was the result of the discussion?

Signed: Date:

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Written By:	Approved By:	Amended By:
Edward Webster	Sharon Lin	Edward Webster