

Procedure 2.5 Complaints					
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Policy Owner : Principal / CEO

- ❖ This procedure is shared with our students and/or can be obtained:
 - on our website <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>,
 - on the desktops of all computers in the library on the top floor,
 - by emailing us at info@docklandsacademy.co.uk.
- ❖ Also, our students are informed about the main aspects of the procedure in the Student Handbooks, Induction Seminar and Learning Agreement.
- ❖ The procedure is reviewed and monitored on a regular basis for currency and fitness as part of our 1.9 Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures.

1. Background

- 1.1** The Academy has a formal Appeals Procedure (Procedure 2.4) and a Complaints Procedure (Procedure 2.5) relating to learners, both part of a suite of procedures under Policy 2 Academic Management, which can be found at: <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures> UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance, *Concerns, Complaints and Appeals* (Guidelines 1-8) is being followed by the Academy to deal with student appeal and complaints. In addition, since we are a member of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), British Council (BC), British Accreditation Council (BAC) and Pearson Edexcel, we follow their guidelines, such as “*OIA Good Practice Framework* and *BAC Accreditation Handbook Section 10. Complaints*” in developing and administering our complaints and appeals processes.
- 1.2** We ensure that learners are fully informed and aware of complaints and appeals procedures by providing them related guidelines during Induction, in the Student Handbooks and on our website.
- 1.3** The Academy welcomes comments and suggestions from students about the services it provides. Students wishing to make a suggestion or comment about the Academy's policies or services, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally:
- at the point where the service is provided,
 - by contacting the person in charge of the relevant area,
 - by raising the matter with the student representative on the appropriate Academy committee or with their lecturer.



- 1.4** Occasionally, however, students may wish to make a complaint about the services they receive. This document sets out the procedure for making a complaint to the Academy. The Academy recognises that it has a duty to provide fair and objective procedures for examining and resolving complaints, and to ensure that its procedures are free from partiality arising from personal or institutional conflict of interest or other sources of bias. No student will be disadvantaged due to having raised a complaint, but the Academy also expects that students will not make frivolous, vexatious, or malicious complaints.
- 1.5** This document covers complaints from students and stages of complaints only in areas that are fully within the control of the Academy. The Academy is responsible for all the services it provides for students, and comments or complaints about these should follow the procedures outlined in this document. This includes student-to-student complaints if these cannot be sorted out informally by the students themselves or by the Welfare Officer, who may be consulted for advice and support.
- 1.6** Where the issues raised affect a number of students, those students can submit a complaint or academic appeal as a 'group complaint' or a 'group appeal'. In such circumstances, the Academy can ask the group to nominate one student to act as group representative. The Academy may decide to communicate only through the representative and expect him or her to liaise with the other students. It also includes those who have recently left the Academy, although former students may only be able to raise issues of complaint or academic appeal within an explicitly defined period after the end of their studies.
- 1.7** The Academy has completed an equality impact assessment linked to the complaints procedure. As a part of internal verification and self-assessment process:
- 1.7.1** The Senior Management Team receives a Self-Assessment Report by the Head of Quality at the end of each academic year, which includes a section regarding the whole complaints procedure and the analysis of various feedback mentioned below.
- 1.7.2** Students having submitted any complaints are asked to fill in a feedback form (**Appendix 8**), which considers not only demographic information such as how the complaint was communicated to the Academy, the theme of the complaint and key characteristics of the complainant but also how well the complaints process is managed such as the degree to which the handling of complaints was in line with the timelines described within the procedure.
- 1.7.3** The Academy also accesses feedback from Student Representatives on behalf of all the students regarding the effectiveness of the complaints policy and procedure via minuted discussions at the Student Committee and Academic and Advisory Committee Meetings as well as the outcomes of an annual Student Induction Survey. The Academy always provides a direct response to those feedback.
- 1.7.4** The Complaints Procedure is shared with staff through the staff induction process that they access on joining DAL. This procedure is subject to review every year. Given the need to cover the process with students and provide a summary within Programme Handbooks the Academy uses regular CPD to maintain staff currency in relation to this key area.

2. What is a complaint?

For the purpose of this framework, a student complaint is defined as *“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about a provider’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the Academy.”* This embraces, but is broader than, the definition of a complaint within the UK Quality Code.

3. Areas Covered or not Covered by this Procedure

3.1 The Complaints Policy should not be used:

- to request a review of an academic judgment or progress decision made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert is sufficient, such as an assessment mark, a degree classification, fitness to practice, research methodology or course content/outcomes, a progression decision such as failing a module or the year, or the calculation of your degree. These matters should be raised through the DAL Procedure 2.4 Appeals.
- for complaints of staff misconduct (which will be considered under the Policy for investigating student complaints of Procedure 2.1 Academy Staff Misconduct).
- for matters relating to Student Loan Company.

3.2 The Complaints Policy can be used for:

- the quality and standards of a service provided by the Academy, including learning and teaching provision, advice, resources and facilities,
- the admissions process or its outcomes,
- failure to apply an administrative or academic process,
- concerns about the impact of an Academy policy, even if it has been correctly applied,
- failure by the Academy to meet obligations including those outlined in student handbooks,
- misleading or incorrect information in prospectuses or promotional material and other information provided by the Academy,
- poor quality of facilities,

3.3 A decision about assessment will normally involve academic judgment. However, the following areas do not involve academic judgment and can be considered under Complaints procedure:

- decisions about the fairness of related assessment procedures, whether they have been correctly interpreted,
- how the Academy has communicated with the student,
- whether an opinion has been expressed outside the area of an academic's competence,
- the way the evidence has been considered whether there is evidence of bias or maladministration.

3.4 For academic matters, responsibility for dealing with complaints about academic matters lies with the Academic Head. If students have any comments or complaints relating to supervision, these should be addressed either to the lecturer concerned or Head of Academic Administration or to the Academic Head. If they wish to make comments about lectures, seminars, etc, organized by curriculum teams, they should raise the issue with the Academic Head.

4. Selection of Investigators

If the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage, the student is guided to select an investigator in whom they have confidence. If the student does not have any preference, the Head of Academic Administration appoints an investigator who has no involvement to investigate the complaint in the previous stage. In the case of not finding a suitable investigator, someone from another department within the Academy or a neighbouring provider (*with whom a reciprocal arrangement has been made*) will be asked to consult. If the complaint is against the Head of Academic Administration, the complaint should be put in writing to the Academic Head, who will appoint a programme lecturer to guide the student.



5. Time Scales

- 5.1 An initial response to any complaint can be expected within two (2) weeks of its receipt, and a full and considered response to a complaint should be completed within a further two (2) weeks at most, with any subsequent remedy implemented with minimum delay in line with OIA and UK Quality Code Guidelines. If complainants are not consent with the outcome, they can proceed to the next stage by submitting for a further complaint within two (2) weeks after they receive the Outcome Form.
- 5.2 Former students who have left the Academy also have the right to complain although they may only be able to raise issues of complaint or academic appeal within an explicitly defined period of 12 months after the end of their studies.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

In compliance with Equality Act 2010, Docklands Academy London acknowledges the importance of ensuring equal opportunities is given to students, puts value on diversity and promotes a culture of inclusion. All members of the community are expected to treat others equally. If the complaint is of a Racist or Discriminatory manner Procedure 4.8 Racist and Discriminatory Behaviour will be activated. Where a student or member of staff feels they have been subjected to victimization, harassment or bullying, they should feel free to speak without fear of retaliation or victimization. Normally, in the first instance the complaint should be raised informally with the Head of Academic Administration or Welfare Officer. The complaint and discussion will be treated with confidence. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the formal complaints procedure will be activated as explained under Section 8.1 below.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 Every attempt related to Complaints Procedure will be made to maintain the confidentiality of a complainant. However, where a complaint is of a personal nature against an individual, it is likely that the complainant's identity would have to be revealed at some stage in all, but the most exceptional cases in order to allow a fair investigation. For example, where a complaint is made against an individual, that person has the right to know who is complaining against them and what the nature of the complaint is. The Academy will endeavour to inform of a complainant of the extent to which their identity is likely to be revealed at each stage of the procedure.
- 7.2 Throughout the formal complaints procedure, a written record of the complaint will be taken and made available on request to anyone involved in the matter (subject to the protocols on confidentiality noted above). At Stage 1, the written record will be maintained by the Head of Academic Administration; at Stage 2 it will be the responsibility of the Academic Head to keep a written record and to send a copy to the CEO / Principal. Please refer to the DAL Procedure 1.7 Data Protection.
- 7.3 Where the issues raised affect a number of students, those students can submit a complaint or academic appeal as a 'group complaint' or a 'group appeal'. In such circumstances, the Academy asks the group to nominate up to two students to act as group representative(s) and to hold communication through them to liaise with the other students.

8. The Complaints Procedure follows the steps below:

Informal Complaint Procedure / Early Resolution (if not →)

Formal Complaint Procedure (Stage 1) / Initial Submission (if not →)

Formal Complaint Procedure (Stage 2) / Internal Review (if not →)

Formal Complaint Procedure (Stage 3) External Review (QIA/BAC/Pearson)

8.1 Informal Complaint Procedure (*Early Resolution*)

8.1.1 The Academy expects complaints to be dealt with informally in the first instance (ideally within 2 weeks) quickly and effectively in order to address concerns immediately and locally before they escalate to formal complaints. This can include:

- face-to-face discussion with the student,
- learning about the specific concern,
- defining the Academy's area(s) involved,
- clarifying the outcome the student is expecting and whether it can be achieved,
- determining whether it can be resolved with little or no investigation, also on the spot by providing, where appropriate:
 - detailed explanation of why the issue occurred,
 - information of what will be done to prevent a similar situation happening again,
 - (alternative) solution(s) or,
 - an apology,
- introducing the student to a suitable member of staff / mediator to assist them in confidential mediation,
- being empathetic and understanding.

8.1.2 If the matter relates to a student-to-student complaint, the matter can be raised directly with the student who is giving cause for complaint. At the outset, a student with a complaint will be invited to suggest the remedy they are seeking for, without prejudice to the outcome. If informal discussion does not resolve the issue satisfactorily, the person responsible for the area (*Welfare Officer, Class Representative, Academy Student Representative etc.*) to which the complaint relates can be approached. If that still does not resolve the issue, the student should consult their lecturer and the complaint is formally raised.

8.1.3 In an event the matter relates to a student-to-staff complaint, a similar course of action is followed. The investigation is conducted by an individual who is independent of the situation and chosen according to the points mentioned in section 4, and appropriate support is provided to help the student and staff member through the process.

8.1.4 The complaints procedure aims to resolve complaints at an "informal" stage; however, the student will be directed promptly to the formal complaint procedure if:

- the student declines to engage with early resolution and starts the formal complaint process,
- the student is not satisfied,
- it is clear that early resolution is not possible, or the matter cannot be resolved because the issue is complicated and will need detailed investigation.

8.1.5 Regardless how the attempt of early resolution ends, the investigator or mediator dealing with the case completes an Informal Complaint Outcome Form (**Appendix 4**) in which:

- the actions taken to consider and resolve the issue are listed,
- brief details of what has been communicated to the student are provided with timelines,
- the outcome / decision set out.

8.1.6 Two copies of the form are produced, both of which are signed by the relevant member of Academic Staff and the student; one copy to be given to the student within 2 weeks and the other to be filed in the Student's File to be accessed during any formal complaint at a later stage.

8.2 Formal Complaints Procedure

8.2.1 Stage One (Initial Submission)

8.2.1.1 If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily via Informal Complaint Stage, the complaint should be made in writing to the Head of Academic Administration by completing Formal Complaint Submission Form - Stage 1 (**Appendix 2**) within two weeks after the student receives the Informal Complaint Outcome Form, in which full details of the complaint and any relevant documentation should be provided.

8.2.1.2 The Head of Academic Administration will acknowledge receipt, but before the Formal Complaint Process is initiated, s/he:

- might reject the complaint if it has not been submitted:
 - under the right procedures in the Academy's policies and procedures,
 - within the deadline (2 weeks following the outcome of the initial stage received by the student),
 - in the required format set out in the Formal Complaint Submission Form - Stage 1 where the student has clearly defined
 - what the complaint is about
 - which area(s) of the Academy involved,
 - what outcome they are expecting,
- might lead the student to another procedure depending on the criteria, such as if:
 - it is an academic appeal,
 - early resolution were not attempted (*if not, the matter should be referred back to that stage*)
 - the complaint is suitable for mediation,

8.2.1.3 Otherwise, the Head of Academic Administration starts the process as soon as possible. In addition, complaints requiring immediate action as listed below are dealt with swiftly.

- involving a threat of serious harm,
- which has detrimental consequences for the student's mental health or where the student displays significant distress,
- relating to disability support issues of serious and repeated service failure and/or significant delay,
- of a highly sensitive nature.

- 8.2.1.4** In the case of a racist, discriminatory, abusive or extremist behaviour, a different procedure is followed. For further details about handling such a very sensitive issue, please refer to DAL Procedure 6.16 Prevent Duty (Racist, Discriminatory, Abusive and Extremist Behaviour).
- 8.2.1.5** Based on their investigation, the Head of Academic Administration or a member of academic staff / the investigator (*chosen according to the points mentioned in section 4*) will produce a report by completing a Formal Complaint Outcome Form - Stage 1 (**Appendix 5**) which outlines:
- the actions taken,
 - brief details of what has been communicated to the student are provided with timelines,
 - the outcome / decision, and the reasons for the decision taken,
 - how and when it will implement any remedy,
 - what the student can do,
 - any recommendations if they remain dissatisfied,
 - the student's rights to take the complaint to Stage 2 (Internal Review)
 - the grounds which they can do so,
 - the time limit to escalate to the Internal Review Stage, (2 weeks)
 - the appropriate procedure,
 - where and how to access support.
- 8.2.1.6** Two copies of the form are produced, both of which are signed by the Head of Academic Administration and the student; one copy to be given to the student within 4 weeks and the other to be filed in the Student's File to be accessed during any formal complaint at a later stage.

8.2.2 Stage Two (*Internal Review*)

- 8.2.2.1** It is hoped that very few complaints would remain unresolved after Stage 1 . However, the student can request a review, if:
- the complaint remains unresolved,
 - the student is dissatisfied with the outcome,
 - new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process is now available,
 - they have at least one of the below concerns about the procedures followed at the Stage 1.
 - a) the Academy made a significant administrative error(s) when considering the complaint, which was material or potentially material to the decision reached,
 - b) the complaint outcome was not reasonable, in that no reasonable person or body could have reached the same decision on the available evidence,
 - c) the availability of new evidence, which materially impacts the complaint outcome and which, for valid reasons, could not have been submitted at an earlier stage
- 8.2.2.2** The request for review should be made in writing to the Academic Head within 2 weeks by completing Formal Complaint Internal Review Request Form - Stage 2 (**Appendix 3**), in which full background details of the complaint until then and any relevant documentation should be provided. Review requests made after the deadline will be considered late and then the student will need to include an

evidenced valid reason for the lateness. If the request is out of time and the student has not provided any evidence for being late, the student can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter (COP) (**Appendix 7**) to elevate the complaint to an external review.

- 8.2.2.3** The Academic Head will allocate the request for review to a designated member of staff or (where appropriate) a panel of investigators not involved at any previous stage to undertake an independent assessment of the case and come to a conclusion on the matter. It is ensured that both the investigator or the Panel members and the student understand the purpose and scope of the review. If the student's expectations appear to exceed the scope of the review stage, the Academy informs the student in the meanest time to manage expectations about possible outcomes.
- 8.2.2.4** Some key points are taken into consideration during the Internal Review Stage, such as if:
- the relevant procedures were followed during the Stage One,
 - the outcome was reasonable within the circumstances,
 - all the evidence provided by the student has been fully evaluated and considered,
 - the student has received clear reasons why the complaint was rejected at Stage One,
 - new material evidence has been provided and the student has provided valid excuses for not supplying earlier.
- 8.2.2.5** If the student is required to attend in person as part of the investigation into a complaint, they are entitled to be accompanied at any stage by a member of the Academy: this could be a lecturer or other senior member, or a student including a class representative or Academy Student Representative.
- 8.2.2.6** Based on their investigation, the Academic Head and the investigator(s) (*chosen according to the points mentioned in Section 4*) will produce a report by completing Formal Complaint Internal Review Outcome Form - Stage 2 (**Appendix 6**) which outlines:
- the actions taken,
 - the outcome / decision, and the reasons for the decision taken,
 - how and when it will implement any remedy, (where a complaint is upheld)
 - what the student can do,
 - the student's rights to take the complaint to the relevant external body at Stage 3 (OIA / BAC / Pearson),
 - the time limit to escalate to Stage 3, (e.g., for OIA within 12 months receiving the outcome)
 - the appropriate procedure,
 - where and how to access further support.
- 8.2.2.7** Two copies of the form are produced, both of which are signed by the Academic Head and the student; one copy to be given to the student within 4 weeks and the other to be filed in the Student's File to be accessed during any formal complaint at a later stage.
- 8.2.2.8** The student(s) is also informed that if they are not satisfied with the result and want to appeal to the relevant body, they can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter (COP) within 2 weeks following the issue date of the form, and the letter must be delivered to the student within 28 days. If the student makes a request after the

deadline has passed, then DAL should issue a COP Letter that states the date upon which the final decision was reached on the complaint or appeal. The time for bringing the complaint to OIA will normally run from that date, rather than the date of the COP Letter.

8.2.3 Stage 3 (External Review)

8.2.3.1 The Academy rules provide for an independent review of appeals and complaints through the independent ombudsman service OIA or other routes, such as BC, BAC and Pearson since the Academy is also a member of these awarding bodies. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, having followed all the appropriate appeal or complaints procedures, it may be open to them ultimately to refer the matter to the related awarding body and/or OIA. The complaint should be submitted to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

8.2.3.2 Advice on the appropriate procedures may be obtained from the CEO / Principal.

9 External Complaint Routes

9.1 The Academy is a member of OIA and abides by OIA guidance in its complaint-handling processes.

9.2 The students are fully informed during their induction process that they are able to raise complaints through Office for the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), Pearson, British Accreditation Council (BAC) and British Council (BC).

- OIA → <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how-to-complain-to-us/>
- BAC → <https://www.the-bac.org/bac-complaints-procedure/>
- Pearson → <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/contact-us/feedback-and-complaints.html>
- British Council → <https://www.britishcouncil.org/contact/complaints>

10 Related Documents

10.1 Policies

- 2 Academic Management
- 4 Admissions
- 5 Student Support, Engagement and Learning Resources
- 7 Information

10.2 Procedures

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 Equal Opportunities • 1.7 Data Protection • 1.9 Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures • 2.1 Academic Misconduct • 2.2 Academic Regulations • 2.4 Appeals • 2.6 Self-Assessment and Annual Programme Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.7 Program Design and Approval • 2.8 Plagiarism • 2.9 Academic References for Students • 2.10 Special Circumstances Affecting Study • 2.11 Pearson Registration • 2.12 Contingency and Adverse Effects • 2.13 Access and Participation Statement • 3.6 Internal Verification • 4.1 Student Enrolment and Selection |
|---|---|



- 4.4 Attendance Monitoring
- 4.6 Student Induction
- 4.7 Student Disciplinary
- 4.11 Student Protection Plan
- 5.1 Student Code of Conduct
- 5.3 Equality, Diversity and Special Needs
- 6.5 Discipline at Work
- 6.8 Grievances and Complaints
- 6.14 Academic Misconduct by Staff
- 6.15 Safeguarding
- 6.16 Prevent Duty (Racist, Discriminatory, Abusive and Extremist Behaviour)
- 7.1 Review and Sign off PI
- 7.4 HE Public Information

10.3 Terms and Conditions

10.4 External Reference Points

- Office for Students (OfS) Requirements and Guidance at [Advice and guidance - Office for Students](#)
- British Accreditation Council (BAC) Accreditation Handbook at <http://www.the-bac.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Accreditation-Handbook-2022-web-compressed.pdf>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access>
- UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Concerns, Complaints and Appeals at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/concerns-complaints-and-appeals>
- Higher Education Code of Governance (Committee of University Chairs, December 2014) at <https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CUC-HE-Code-of-Governance-publication-final.pdf>
- Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) principles of Good Governance for Independent Training Providers at <https://www.aelp.org.uk/media/2595/code-of-governance-final-sept-2018.pdf>
- OIA The Good Practice Framework: Handling Students Complaints and Academic Appeals at <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/1859/oia-good-practice-framework.pdf>
- OIA Disciplinary Procedures at <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/2045/good-practice-framework-disciplinary-procedures-section.pdf>
- UKCISA Code of Ethics at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Membership/Codes-of-practice/Code-of-ethics>
- Equality Act – 2010 at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

COMPLAINTS PROCESS FLOWCHART



Informal Complaint Procedure (Early Resolution)
Outcome to the complainant

- by the investigator/mediator
- in 2 weeks



YES

End of Procedure

NO

End of Procedure



YES

NO

Formal complaint Stage 1 (Initial Review)
Submission by the complainant

- in 2 weeks following the issue date of the Informal Complaint Outcome Form
- by filling in Formal Complaint Submission Form

Outcome to the complainant

- by the Head of Academic Administration
- in 4 weeks

Formal complaint Stage 2 (Internal Review)
Submission by the complainant

- in 2 weeks following the issue date of the Formal Complaint Outcome Form
- by filling in Formal Complaint Internal Review Request Form

Outcome to the complainant

- by the Academic Head or a nominee
- in 4 weeks



YES

End of Procedure

NO

Formal Complaint Stage 3 (External Review)
Submission by the complainant

- to the external relevant body (e.g., OIA)
- in 12 months following the issue date of Formal Complaint Internal Review Request Outcome Form
- with a Completion of Procedures Letter obtained from the Academy



Appendix 2

Formal Complaint Submission Form – Stage 1

A decision to your complaint will be made on the basis of the information supplied by you. It is therefore important that your submission is written in as clear and succinct a manner as possible.

Contact Details		Course Information	
Surname/Family Name		Student ID	
First Name		Programme	
Address		Level	
		Full-Time	
Post code		Part-Time	
Mobile		Distance Edu.	
Email		Academy Email	
Group Complaints <i>If you submit a complaint as a group, all members of the group must sign the complaint form. The group must elect representatives (maximum 2) to speak and meet on behalf of the group.</i>			
If this is a group complaint, who are the spokespersons (maximum 2 students)?			
Spokesperson 1			
Spokesperson 2			
Do you have a disability? <i>(Please circle the appropriate choice)</i>			Yes / No
Do you think you will need any disability related support or adjustments at any stage during the complaints process? <i>(Please circle the appropriate choice)</i>			Yes / No
If yes, please detail your requirements for adjustments during the complaints process here <i>(for example forms in a different format, support at meetings, assistance with access): You do not need to disclose the nature of your disability.</i>			
Complaint against <i>Please indicate the provision (e.g. module, programme), service (e.g. Institute, Discipline, Centre, Support Unit) or individual against which you wish to make a complaint.</i>			



The nature of your complaint

As stated in the 2.5 Student Complaints Procedure, students are encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter informally (at the Early Resolution stage) before submitting a formal complaint.

Have you discussed your complaint with a member of staff as part of the informal procedures for investigating complaints?

Yes: No:

Name of member of staff to whom you initially reported this complaint:

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

If you have not discussed your complaint with a member of staff as part of the informal procedure for investigating complaints, please explain the reasons for not doing so and why you wish to take the complaint to formal procedures.

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

If appropriate, please provide details of the remedy offered after the informal procedures for investigating complaints.

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

If appropriate, please explain why you are dissatisfied with the remedy offered after the informal procedures for investigating complaints.

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)



Please give details of your complaint; continuing on additional sheets if necessary and attach any relevant supporting evidence / documentation you may have as additional material cannot be considered later. *If the matter complained about is complex and occurred over an extended period, please supply a chronology listing the incidents and/or communications relevant to the complaint. If the relevant member of Academic Staff is unable to establish a clear chronology, we may put your complaint on hold and ask you to provide clarification.*

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

Please describe the outcome / resolution you are seeking: *Please outline, without prejudice, the outcome or further action you would like in resolution of this complaint.*

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

Please list the evidence attached to this form, where appropriate: *(please note that the Academy will NOT seek evidence on your behalf – it is your responsibility to provide this with your complaint)*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



DECLARATION:

I would like DAL to consider my complaint and declare that the facts stated in this application are true. I understand that DAL:

- ❖ may need to handle my personal details which may include sensitive information (e.g., relating to my health) in order to deal with my complaint effectively.
- ❖ may need to exchange information related to my complaint with other people within and outside the Academy such as the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).
- ❖ is the data processor and will process my personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- ❖ will need to seek a separate consent in the case of transferring personal data to a data processor.
- ❖ will undertake external transfer of personal data through approved security arrangements and/or sent only to the intended addressee.
- ❖ may retain data relating to my complaint for a specified term in accordance with DAL's Retention Schedule in DAL Procedure 1.7 Data Protection and DAL Privacy Statement on <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/privacy-statement>.

The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I give my consent for this information to be disclosed to the relevant officers of the Academy who are responsible for considering complaints and to any members of staff named in the complaint. Submitting false documentation or fraudulent information is a serious matter and could be dealt with under the Academic Misconduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures. The Academy reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit or statements you make in this complaint.

Signature:

Date:

- Please send the completed form and any supporting evidence via email to complaints@docklandsacademy.co.uk.
- If you would like to submit a paper form, please return it to the relevant member of Academic Staff: 11 Selsdon Way, City Harbour, London E14 9GL United Kingdom.
- Please keep a copy of your completed form and any documents you send. It may not be possible to return the original documents.
- Where possible all correspondence will be via email. Please ensure you keep us updated on any changes to your contact details.



Appendix 3

Formal Complaint Internal Review Request Form – Stage 2

Use this form if:

- ❖ the complaint remains unresolved, or
- ❖ you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint - Stage 1; and
- ❖ you are dissatisfied because of at least one of the permitted grounds for review:
 - a) the Academy made a significant administrative error(s) when considering the complaint, which was material or potentially material to the decision reached,
 - b) the complaint outcome was not reasonable, in that no reasonable person or body could have reached the same decision on the available evidence,
 - c) the availability of new evidence, which materially impacts the complaint outcome and which, for valid reasons, could not have been submitted at an earlier stage

Before completing this form, please ensure you:

- a) have read the 2.5 Student Complaints Procedure before completing this form. It can be found at <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>.
- b) seek advice or support from your Lecturer, Welfare Officer or a member of Academic Staff.

A decision to review your complaint will be made on the basis of the information supplied by you. It is therefore important that your submission is written in as clear and succinct a manner as possible.

Things to remember when submitting a request for review:

- complete all sections of the form and include all evidence you wish to be considered,
- send the completed form and any supporting evidence via email to complaints@docklandsacademy.co.uk.
- If you would like to submit a paper form, please return it to the relevant member of Academic Staff: 11 Selsdon Way, City Harbour, London E14 9GL United Kingdom.
- keep a copy of your completed form and any documents you send. It may not be possible to return the original documents.
- Where possible all correspondence will be via email. Please ensure you keep us updated on any changes to your contact details.

You cannot use this form if you:

- want to raise a complaint about a different matter to the one in your formal complaint Submission Form - Stage 1.
- are dissatisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint but not because of one of the permitted grounds. In this case, you can ask for a Completion of Procedures letter, which may enable you to raise a complaint with the external ombudsman, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.



Contact Details		Course Information	
Surname/Family Name		Student ID	
First Name		Programme	
Address		Level	
		Full-Time	
Post code		Part-Time	
Mobile		Distance Edu.	
Email		Academy Email	
Group Complaints <i>If you submit a complaint as a group, all members of the group must sign the complaint form. The group must elect representatives (maximum 2) to speak and meet on behalf of the group.</i> If this is a group complaint, who are the spokespersons (maximum 2 students)?			
Spokesperson 1			
Spokesperson 2			
Do you have a disability? <i>(Please circle the appropriate choice)</i>			Yes / No
Do you think you will need any disability related support or adjustments at any stage during the complaints process? <i>(Please circle the appropriate choice)</i>			Yes / No
If yes, please detail your requirements for adjustments during the complaints process here <i>(for example forms in a different format, support at meetings, assistance with access): You do not need to disclose the nature of your disability.</i>			
Please identify the grounds on which your request for review is based.			
If your request for review relates to a formal complaint decision that was sent over 2 weeks ago, please confirm your reason for your lateness. <i>(Please include evidence)</i>			



The nature of your Internal Review Request

If you have asked for a resolution at Stage 1, please outline details of the steps you have taken, who you contacted with and when, and the outcome received, and why you feel the outcome has been unsatisfactory and you seek for an Internal Review.

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

Please provide any relevant supporting new evidence you wish to be considered with your request for review. *If the matter complained about is complex and occurred over an extended period, please supply a chronology listing the incidents and/or communications relevant to the complaint. If the relevant member of Academic Staff is unable to establish a clear chronology, we may put your complaint on hold and ask you to provide clarification.*

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)

Please describe the outcome / resolution you are seeking: *Please outline, without prejudice, the outcome or further action you would like in resolution of this complaint.*

(this box will expand as you type or you may attach additional sheets)



Please list the evidence attached to this form, where appropriate: *(please note that the Academy will NOT seek evidence on your behalf – it is your responsibility to provide this with your complaint)*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

DECLARATION:

I would like DAL to consider my complaint and declare that the facts stated in this application are true. I understand that DAL:

- ❖ may need to handle my personal details which may include sensitive information (e.g., relating to my health) in order to deal with my complaint effectively.
- ❖ may need to exchange information related to my complaint with other people within and outside the Academy such as the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).
- ❖ is the data processor and will process my personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- ❖ will need to seek a separate consent in the case of transferring personal data to a data processor.
- ❖ will undertake external transfer of personal data through approved security arrangements and/or sent only to the intended addressee.
- ❖ may retain data relating to my complaint for a specified term in accordance with DAL's Retention Schedule in DAL Procedure 1.7 Data Protection and DAL Privacy Statement on <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/privacy-statement>.

The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I give my consent for this information to be disclosed to the relevant officers of the Academy who are responsible for considering complaints and to any members of staff named in the complaint. Submitting false documentation or fraudulent information is a serious matter and could be dealt with under the Academic Misconduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures. The Academy reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit or statements you make in this complaint.

Signature:

Date:



Appendix 4

Complaint Outcome Form – Informal Stage (Early Resolution)

Contact Details		Course Information	
Surname/Family Name		Student ID	
First Name		Programme	
Address		Level	
		Full-Time	
Post code		Part-Time	
Mobile		Distance Edu.	
Email		Academy Email	
Complaint against <i>Please indicate the provision (e.g. module, programme), service (e.g. Institute, Discipline, Centre, Support Unit) or individual against which the complaint is made.</i>			
The actions taken to consider and resolve the issue			
Brief details of what has been communicated to the student with timelines			
Remedy offered / the outcome / decision set out			
Is the complainant satisfied with the outcome?			

The student can request a review, if:

- the complaint remains unresolved,
- the student is dissatisfied with the outcome,
- has concerns about the procedures followed at the Informal Stage,
- new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process is now available.



The request for Initial Review should be made in writing to the Head of Academic Administration within 2 weeks by completing Complaint Submission Form - Stage 1, in which full background details of the complaint until then and any relevant documentation should be provided.

Member of staff initially reported this complaint:	Signature:	Date:
Investigator dealing with this complaint:	Signature:	Date:
Complainant: <i>I received a copy of the Complaint Outcome Form.</i>	Signature:	Date:



Appendix 5

Formal Complaint Outcome Form – Stage 1 (Initial Review)

Contact Details		Course Information	
Surname/Family Name		Student ID	
First Name		Programme	
Address		Level	
		Full-Time	
Post code		Part-Time	
Mobile		Distance Edu.	
Email		Academy Email	
Complaint against <i>Please indicate the provision (e.g. module, programme), service (e.g. Institute, Discipline, Centre, Support Unit) or individual against which the complaint is made.</i>			
The complaint has been rejected due to the reasons mentioned in the next box.			
The complaint has been led to another procedure due to the reasons mentioned in the next box.			
The actions taken to consider and resolve the issue			
Brief details of what has been communicated to the student with timelines			
Remedy offered / the outcome / decision set out			
How and when it will be implemented			



The student can request a review, if:

- the complaint remains unresolved,
- the student is dissatisfied with the outcome,
- has concerns about the procedures followed at the Stage One,
- new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process is now available.

The request for Internal Review should be made in writing to the Academic Head within 2 weeks by completing *Complaint Internal Review Request Form - Stage 2*, in which full background details of the complaint until then and any relevant documentation should be provided.

Investigator dealing with this complaint:	Signature:	Date:
Complainant: <i>I received a copy of the Complaint Outcome Form.</i>	Signature:	Date:



Appendix 6

Formal Complaint Internal Review Outcome Form – Stage 2

Contact Details		Course Information	
Surname/Family Name		Student ID	
First Name		Programme	
Address		Level	
		Full-Time	
Post code		Part-Time	
Mobile		Distance Edu.	
Email		Academy Email	
Complaint against <i>Please indicate the provision (e.g. module, programme), service (e.g. Institute, Discipline, Centre, Support Unit) or individual against which the complaint is made.</i>			
The relevant procedures were followed during the Stage One. If not, provide details.			
The outcome was reasonable within the circumstances. If not, provide details.			
New material evidence has been provided. The student has provided valid excuses for not supplying earlier.			
The new actions taken to consider the issue under the light of new evidence.			
Where a complaint is upheld: Reasons for upholding Remedy offered / the outcome / decision set out How and when it will be implemented			
Brief details of what has been communicated to the student with timelines.			



The student can appeal to the relevant body, if:

- the complaint remains unresolved,
- the student is dissatisfied with the outcome,
- has concerns about the procedures followed at the Stage Two,
- new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process is now available.

The student can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter within 2 weeks following the issue date of this form.

If the student makes a request after the deadline has passed, then DAL should issue a COP Letter that states the date upon which the final decision was reached on the complaint or appeal. The time for bringing the complaint to OIA will normally run from that date, rather than the date of the COP Letter.

Investigator(s) dealing with this complaint:	Signature:	Date:
Complainant: <i>I received a copy of the Complaint Outcome Form.</i>	Signature:	Date:



Dear *[Name of complainant]*,

Completion of Procedures Letter

This letter confirms that the internal procedures of Docklands Academy London in relation to your *complaint / appeal* regarding *[please describe]* have been completed.

The issues that you raised in your *complaint / appeal etc* were *[details]*

The issue(s) that were considered in relation to your *complaint / appeal* was / were: *[brief summary of the complaint etc]*.

The final decision of Docklands Academy London is *[detail]* because *[reasons]*.

The procedures / regulations applied were: *[details and date as supplied to the OIA's electronic Regulations Bank]*.

Docklands Academy London subscribes to the independent scheme for the review of student complaints. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may be able to apply for a review of *your complaint / appeal* to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided that the complaint you take to the OIA is eligible under its Rules.

Should you decide to make a complaint to the OIA, your OIA Complaint Form **must be received by the OIA** within **12 months** of the date of this letter, that is, it must be received by the OIA **on or before** *[insert date - e.g. if the Completion of Procedures Letter is dated 9 December 2015, this date should be 9 December 2016]*.

[Include here any factors of which the provider is aware which mean that it is particularly important for the student to bring the complaint promptly.]

You can fill in the OIA's complaint form online or download a copy from the OIA website. <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how-to-complain-to-us/>. The OIA also publishes *An Introduction to the OIA Scheme for Students*, which can be downloaded from <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/can-you-complain-to-us/>. Alternatively, you can telephone or write to the OIA for a form. **You should send a copy of this letter to the OIA with your OIA Complaint Form.**

Guidance on submitting a complaint to the OIA and the OIA Complaint Form can also be found on the OIA's website <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how-to-complain-to-us/>. You may also wish to seek advice from refer to Student Welfare Officer about taking your complaint to the OIA. Please note that the OIA will normally only review issues that have been dealt with through the provider's internal procedures.



Your qualification is awarded by Pearson BTEC, which has some responsibility for considering complaints about the overall quality or standards of your qualification. Pearson BTEC is not a member of the OIA Scheme.

In the event that you submit a complaint to the OIA, it will consider your complaint to identify whether it relates to: (1) an act or omission of Docklands Academy London relating to the service provided which falls within the OIA's remit; or (2) the overall quality or standards of the qualification itself. Complaints relating to the design, delivery of assessment, moderation and awarding of the qualification are likely to fall into (2). However, this will be for the OIA to determine.

If the OIA considers that your complaint relates to the overall quality or standards of the qualification itself, it will refer the complaint to Pearson BTEC.

Yours sincerely,

[Authorised signatory]



Appendix 8

Docklands Academy London Complaints Procedure Feedback Form

Name / Surname (Optional):

Please tick the box that is relevant to you.
The information below is asked to improve our customer service.

Documentation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The supporting documents asked were logical.					
I was given enough time to provide the supporting documents.					
The submission form(s) was/were easy to fill in.					
The submission form(s) asked me to provide all the necessary & relevant information.					
The outcome form(s) was/were easy to understand.					
The outcome form(s) provided all the necessary & relevant feedback / information.					
I was facilitated to fill in the relevant Submission Form about my complaint.					
I was asked to sign the declaration on the complaint submission form.					

The Staff

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was allowed to select an investigator.					
The investigator	conducting the process was helpful.				
	tried to learn / understand my main concern.				
	was empathetic and understanding.				
	clarified the outcome I was expecting.				
The Head of Academic Administration conducting the process was helpful.					
The Academic Head monitoring the process was helpful.					



Post-Complaint Services

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I received	the decision/outcome about my submission within 2 - 4 weeks.					
I was clearly informed about	the actions taken to consider and resolve the issue.					
	the further actions that I could take after the decision was given.					
	the time limit to take any further action after the decision was given.					
I was asked to keep a copy of the relevant Complaint Submission Form and any other supporting documents.						

Overall Application Process

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was told to read DAL Procedure 2.5 Complaints on the website.					
The complaints process was easy to follow.					
The steps of the complaints process were designed in a logical flow.					
I was provided accurate information to my questions.					
I was provided detailed information about the process.					
I was treated fairly.					
I was provided timely response within the specified time limits in the 2.5 Complaints Procedure.					
The complaints process was not complicated.					
I was first given the opportunity to resolve the issue informally.					
I was provided a remedy/outcome which I wasn't satisfied with.					
I was provided the remedy/outcome I was expecting.					
I was provided clear reasons for the decision given.					