Academic Guardians UK

Complaints Policy

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction

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Policy owner	Updated	Review date
Andrew Kettle	August 2024	August 2025

Academic Guardians UK Ltd – Complaints Policy

1.1 Our aim

1.1 Academic Guardians UK (AGUK) is committed to providing a quality service for its members and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our students, schools, customers and host families, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

1.2 Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

1.3 We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

1.4 An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

2.0 Definition & purpose

2.1 Academic Guardians UK defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction (with Academic Guardians, with a member of staff, or with a Academic Guardians representative) that requires a formal response'.

2.2 The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Academic Guardians UK responsibilities are to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing
- Respond within a stated period of time
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint
- take action where appropriate.

3.2 A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to Academic Guardians attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in Academic Guardians
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date
- allow Academic Guardians a reasonable time to deal with the matter
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Academic Guardians UK control

4.0 Confidentiality

4.1 Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Academic Guardians maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

5.0 Monitoring and Reporting

5.1 All formal complaints are recorded on the Complaints Monitoring Spreadsheet and a unique folder for each complaint is created in the directors secure sharepoint site.

5.2 Timescale, responses and actions are highlighted on the complaints monitoring spreadsheet.

5.3 The directors of Academic Guardians will review annually all detailed reports of complaints made and their resolution.

6.0 Formal complaints procedure

6.1 In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff who dealt with you, so that he or she has a chance to put things right.

6.2 If your complaint concerns a director of Academic Guardians, rather than a member of Academic Guardians staff, you should write formally to the individual concerned. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

6.3 Director Contact Details:

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Prevent Lead – Director Andrew Kettle who can be contacted on 0203 515 8880, 07823 321 993 or andrew@academic-guardians.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Director Dawn Kettle who can be contacted on 0203 515 8880, 07931 954 106 or dawn@academic-guardians.co.uk

7.0 Timescale

7.1 You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days. If you are unsure which member of Academic Guardians staff to write to, your complaint should be sent to Dawn Kettle, Director.

7.2 Academic Guardians' aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently, timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

8.0 Further action

8.1 If you are unhappy with the outcome please direct the complaint to AEGIS (Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students).

Executive Officer
Association for the Education and
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