

Complaints Policy

1.0 Aims and values

Durham SCITT is committed to providing high quality training that supports trainees as they progress towards achieving the Professional Standards for Qualified Teacher Status. Any complaint about the training course, the management of the training course or the school-based training will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner.

1.1 Leadership and Management

The Durham SCITT Steering Group is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is working in practice
- Directing the work of the Course Development Committee in the monitoring and collation of data relating to complaints
- Monitoring the success of the policy
- Identifying and remedying failures of the policy

The Course Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff are aware of the policy and procedures
- Ensuring all trainees are aware of the policy and its contents
- Implementation of the policy where the complaint is about a school-based matter
- Implementation of the policy where the complaint is connected to an employer offering the apprenticeship route
- Recording and reporting failures of the policy to Steering Group

The Chair of the Course Development Committee is responsible for

- Implementation of the policy where the complaint is about a course or course management matter as well as about an employing school (apprenticeship route) or apprentice.
- Recording and reporting failures of the policy to Steering Group

1.2 Procedures

If a trainee is dissatisfied with any aspect of the course (whether they be school led, core or an apprentice), the Course Management Team should be informed as soon as possible via email or telephoning: 01325309818. We are committed to supporting trainees and will deal with any complaint in a professional manner. We recognise that it may be difficult for a trainee to complain about the course or placement schools as they may feel uncomfortable or vulnerable. Often an informal chat with a tutor or a member of the SCITT training staff can help a situation but, sometimes, this will not suffice, and the trainee may feel the need to take matters further. If, at any time over the training year, a trainee wishes to make a formal complaint about the centrally based training, the course management, training in school, the work of the school tutor or subject tutor within the school or any other aspect of the course, we advise that a trainee can proceed in one of the following ways:

1.2.1 Concern about centrally based training or course management:

Any complaint about the course should be brought to the attention of the Course Development Committee in one of the following ways:

- Using the course evaluation forms
- Speak to one of the trainee representatives on the Course Development Committee
- Contact the Chair of the Course Development Committee

If the complainant is unhappy with outcome of this initial contact with the Course Development Committee, they will be required to submit the complaint in writing to the Chair of the Course Development Committee. The Chair of the Course Development Committee will take responsibility for interviewing the complainant and investigating the complaint fully. The complainant has the right to be accompanied by a friend to this initial interview. If there is insufficient evidence to support the complaint, or the complaint is trivial or malicious in nature, the process should be terminated. The complainant will receive a written response from the Course Development Committee within 20 days of the complaint being lodged as to the outcome of the investigation.

If there is sufficient evidence for the complaint to be upheld, the matter will be referred to Steering Group who will implement a formal investigation. (Please see "Fitness to Practice Policy" for the Formal Investigation Procedures).

1.2.2 Concern about the training in school:

Any complaint about school-based matters should be brought to the attention of the Course Director. The trainee will be asked to submit the complaint in writing. The Course Director will take responsibility for interviewing the complainant and investigating the complaint fully. The complainant has the right to be accompanied by a friend to this initial interview. If there is insufficient evidence to support the complaint or the complaint is trivial or malicious in nature the process should be terminated. The complainant will receive a written response from the Course Director within 20 days of the complaint being lodged as to the outcome of the investigation.

If there is sufficient evidence for the complaint to be upheld, the matter will be referred to Steering Group who will implement a formal investigation. (Please see "Fitness to Practice Policy" for the Formal Investigation Procedures).

Where the training school is an 'employing school' and the complaint is related to an apprentice, the same procedure will be followed as for a school-based trainee, taking into account the complaints procedures of the employing school (if appropriate).

Where the complaint is made by a placement school or employing school (apprenticeship route) with regard to a trainee/apprentice or the services provided by Durham SCITT, the Chair of the Steering group will be responsible for the:

- Implementation of the policy where the complaint is about course management, Durham SCITT or a trainee / apprentice, ensuring impartiality and following the procedures as outlined in 1.2.1
- Recording and reporting failures of the policy to Steering Group
- Gathering feedback / evidence from the appropriate parties
- Leading the investigation and ensuring there is resolution within the specified time limit that satisfies all parties

1.3 Monitoring

- The Steering Group will monitor the implementation of the policy
- The Course Development Committee will survey trainee perceptions and present findings to the Steering Group. Minutes of the Course Development Committee and Steering Group will be available.

1.4 Development and Training

The Course Development Committee will identify training needs through analysis of complaints data. The Steering Group will direct the Course Development Committee to address and propose solutions to any issues arising from failure in policy or procedures.

1.5 Publishing policy

This Policy will be available through the Durham SCITT website and our documentation. A copy is available from the SCITT office.

1.6 Review date for the policy

The Policy will be review tri-annually as part of the SCITT's Policy Review Process.