Staffordshire University Academies Trust

SUAT Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Policy owner	**SLT**
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Statement of Intent

Staffordshire University Academies Trust aims to resolve complaints at the earliest possible stage and where possible, informally. The Trust is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education in all academies.

This policy has been created to handle complaints relating to any aspects of the provision of facilities or services against:

- Any member of staff
- Any academy within the Trust
- Any Local Academy Council of the Trust
- Individual Trustees or the Board of Trustees
- The Trust as a whole

It is designed to ensure that the Trust's complaints procedure is straightforward, impartial, non-adversarial, allows a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality, and delivers an effective response and appropriate redress.

This policy outlines the procedure that the complainant, the Trust and its academies will follow. Once a complaint has been made, it can be resolved or withdrawn at any stage.

1. Legal framework

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

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Part 7 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Immigration Act 2016
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- HM Government (2016) 'Code of Practice on the English language requirement for public sector workers'
- DfE (2021) 'Best practice guidance for academies complaints procedures'
- DfE (2025) **'**Academy trust handbook 2025'

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a "**complaint**" is defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction' towards the actions taken or a perceived lack of action. Complaints can be resolved formally or informally.

A "**concern**" is defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt' where reassurance is required. Concerns may be escalated as informal complaints by following this policy, where a resolution has not been reached prior.

Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether raised formally or informally, and the appropriate procedures will be implemented.

The definition of "**unreasonable complaints**" is outlined in the 'managing unreasonable

complaints' section of this policy.

For the purpose of this policy, "**duplicate complaints**" are identical complaints received from a complainant's spouse, partner or child. These complaints will not be addressed again and the individual making the second complaint will be informed that the complaint has been dealt with on a local level. If the individual is dissatisfied with the result, they can appeal to the DfE. Any new details provided by a complainant's spouse, partner or child, however, will be investigated and managed in line with the complaints procedure.

For the purpose of this policy, "**complaints campaigns**" are where the Trust, or an Academy within the Trust, receives large volumes of complaints that are all based on the same subject.

For the purposes of this policy, having **"independence"** from the Trust and its academies is defined as having no association with the trust, including through being a member, trustee or employee, and having no clear connection with any of the trust's academies, including through being an employee or solicitor. Independent panel members will meet the Trust's and DfE's definition of independence.

The DfE's best practice guidance for managing complaints for academies (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-an-academies-complaints-procedure/best-practice-guidance-for-academies-complaints-procedures) details:

For schools within a multi-academy trust (MAT), the DfE would still suggest that the independent member should have no association with the Trust. However, with the exception of the MAT's Trustees, we are satisfied that a governor, from a local governing body at a different school within the MAT, who has no conflict of interest or prior knowledge of the complaint, can be an independent panel member. This is because such person would have no direct involvement with the management and running of the school being complained about.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. All of the academies within SUAT, and SUAT itself, take concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Headteacher/Principal or other senior leader will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteacher/Principal or other senior member of staff will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, the academies / Trust will attempt to resolve the issue internally,

through the stages outlined within the complaints procedure.

The roles and responsibilities of persons involved in the complaints process and procedure are outlined within Appendix 2.

3. Scope of the Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by the academies within Staffordshire University Academies Trust, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Process
• Admissions	Concerns about admissions should be handled through a separate process – either through the appeals process or via the Local Authority.
• Matters relating to Child Protection	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under the Safeguarding Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
• Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions. **complaints about the application of the Behaviour Policy can be made through the complaints procedure.*
• Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistle-blowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus. Volunteer staff who have concerns should complain through the complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
• Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the Trust grievance procedures.
• Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.

• Third-party suppliers using school premises or facilities	Complaints about third parties shall be referred to separate complaints procedures. Academies will ensure any third-party supplier using school premises or facilities to offer community facilities or services has its own complaints procedures in place and such complaints do not fall within the scope of this policy.
• Anonymous complaints	We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher/Principal or Chair of the Local Academy Council, or Trust, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Complaints relating to data protection shall be managed in accordance with Appendix 3 of this policy.

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at one of the academies of Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT). Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to any of the academies within Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) or to the Central Office about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

4. Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure, SUAT wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- An apology

We do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening. The Trust can immediately suspend the complaint process where the behaviour of the complainant is deemed to be ‘unreasonable’.

5. Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing and the complaint will be closed. The complainant’s voice will be taken seriously, and the

setting shall attempt to avoid causing similar distress to others in the future. Individuals will not be asked or pressured to withdraw a complaint.

6. Unreasonable Complaints

The Trust and academies are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. The Trust does not expect staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

For the purposes of this policy, **"unreasonable complaints"** include:

- Vexatious complaints, which:
  - Are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, or repetitious.
  - Insist upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason.
  - Insist upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner.
  - Are designed to cause disruption or annoyance.
  - Demand for redress which lacks any serious purpose or value.
- Serial or persistent complaints, which:
  - Are duplicated, sent by the same complainant once the initial complaint has been closed.
  - Are new complaints that are submitted additionally, as part of an existing open complaint, by the same complainant.

A complaint may also be regarded as unreasonable when the complainant:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- Refuses to cooperate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure.
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice.
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales.
- Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues and seeks to have them replaced.
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed.
- Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the Trust's complaints procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed, including referral to the DfE.
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- Makes excessive demands on academy and / or Trust time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the complainant:

- Acts maliciously or aggressively.
- Uses threats, intimidation or violence.
- Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language.
- Knows the complaint to be false.
- Uses falsified information.
- Publishes unacceptable information in media such as social media websites and newspapers.

The above applies regardless of the method the complaint is made, e.g. face-to-face, by telephone, in writing or electronically.

Complainants should limit the number of communications with the Trust / academy while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent, either by letter, phone, email or text, as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the individual leading the response to a complaint will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

Serial or persistent complaints will only be marked as 'serial' once the complainant has completed the complaints procedure. It is the complaint that will be marked as 'serial', meaning the complainant can complain about a separate issue if necessary.

If the behaviour continues, the individual handling the complaint will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the Trust or any of its academies, causing a significant level of disruption, the Trust may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after six months.

A decision to stop responding will only be considered in circumstances where the following statements are true:

- Every reasonable step has been taken to address the complainant's concerns.
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of the Trust's position and their options.
- The complainant contacts the Trust or any of its academies repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time.

The case to stop responding is stronger if one or more of these statements applies:

- The complainant's letters, emails, or telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive.
- The complainant makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff.
- The setting has reason to believe the individual is contacting them with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience.

If the above criteria are met, in making a decision to stop responding, the Trust will also consider if the complainant is often abusive or aggressive in their communication, makes insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff, or if the Trust believes their intent is to disrupt or inconvenience the Trust or its academies. The Trust and academies will not stop responding to a complainant on the basis that they are difficult to deal with or they ask complex questions. A complaint may be determined as unreasonable and a decision to stop responding may be made at any stage of the policy.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions

taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from the premises.

7. Communication Strategy for Persistent Correspondents

If an individual's behaviour is causing a significant level of disruption, regardless of whether or not they have raised a complaint, settings can implement a tailored communication strategy. For example, they can:

- Restrict the individual to a single point of contact via an email address.
- Limit the number of times they can make contact, such as a fixed number of contacts per term.

All settings must act reasonably and consider any new complaint.

8. Duplicate Complaints

After closing a complaint at the end of the complaints procedure, a duplicate complaint may be received, for example, from:

- A spouse
- A partner
- A grandparent
- A child

If the complaint is about the same subject, the Trust and academies can inform the new complainant that the complaint has already been considered and the local process is complete.

Care must be taken not to overlook any new aspects to the complaint that may not have previously been raised or considered and it should be ensured that these are investigated and dealt with to the full extent of the complaints procedure.

9. How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Complaints against Academy staff (except the Headteacher/ Principal) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher/ Principal via the academy office**.** Please mark as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher/ Principal should be addressed to the Chair of the Local Academy Council (LAC), via the academy office. Please mark as Private and Confidential.

All other complaints will be directed towards the procedures laid out in this policy. You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, Local Authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations. If this happens, we will inform you of a proposed new timescale.

If a complainant commences legal action against any Staffordshire University Academies Trust in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Complaints Procedure

For ease of access, a template complaint form (Appendix 1) is included at the end of this procedure. This form should be used when raising a complaint and will be required for any complaint progressing from stage one to stage two. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask a third- party organisation for example like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider the reasonable adjustments that can be made if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

This document is implemented on a Trust-wide level. The Trust will ensure that the complaints procedure is:

- Easily accessible and publicised on its website.
- Simple to understand and put into practice.
- Impartial and fair to all parties involved.
- Respectful of confidentiality duties.
- Continuously under improvement, using input from the SLTs of all individual academies within the Trust.
- Fairly investigated, by an independent person where necessary.
- Used to address all issues to provide appropriate and effective responses where necessary.

Our complaints procedure involves three official stages plus the option to review the process after Stage 3:

1. Informal
2. Formal
3. Panel hearing

Post stage three: Complaint Review

At each stage, complainants will be informed of their options for escalation if they are unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint. The appropriate person will communicate the details of the next stage of the process when delivering the outcome of the current stage, where applicable.

To prevent later challenge or disagreement over what was said in any in-person meetings or

telephone conversations at any stage of the procedure, notes will be kept, and a copy of any written response and correspondence will be added to the record of the complaint. Notes and paper copies of any complaints and/or responses are kept securely on each setting's ICT system.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, along with what actions have been taken, regardless of the decision.

All correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Raising a complaint	Complainants must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents.
Stage One	Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within five school days. It is anticipated that the investigation will take no longer than ten school days. A written response will be provided within two school days of the outcome.
Stage Two	Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within five school days. It is anticipated that the investigation will take no longer than ten school days. A written response will be provided within two (school) days of the outcome.
Stage Three	A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made within five school days of receipt of the Stage 2 response. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within five school days. The Clerk will aim to convene a meeting within fifteen school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. At least ten school days before the meeting, the Clerk will: • Confirm and notify all parties of the date, time and venue of the meeting • Request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least five school days before the meeting.

	A written response will be provided within two (school) days of the outcome.
Complaint Review	Request a review of the process by a Trust central office employee within 5 school days of receiving the response from the panel meeting. The timescale for requesting a review is 15 working days from the receipt of the letter of outcome at Stage 3. The Trust will aim to make this decision and inform complainants of this within 5 school days. The Trust will aim to complete this process within 30 working days.

Investigation

Please mark communications as private and confidential.

Complaint is About	**Point of Contact**	**Investigated By**
A member of academy staff	Address the complaint to the Headteacher / Principal and send to the academy office	Headteacher / Principal or member of the Academy's senior leadership team *Note: The Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.*
Headteacher / Principal	Address the complaint to the Chair of the Local Academy Council and send to the academy office	Chair of the Local Academy Council
A member of the Local Academy Council	Address the complaint to the Chair of the Local Academy Council and send to the academy office	Chair of the Local Academy Council * If the complaint is: • Jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or • The entire Local Academy Council (LAC) or • The majority of the

		Local Academy Council (LAC) Stage 3 will be heard by the Trustees and an independent panel member.
The Chair of the Local Academy Council	Address the complaint to the Local Academy Council and send to the academy office	Vice Chair of the Local Academy Council
A member of the central Trust team	Address the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer and send to the Trust office	Chief Executive Officer
The Chief Executive Officer	Address the complaint to the Chair of the Trust Board and send to the Trust office	Chair of the Trust Board
A member of the Trust Board	Address the complaint to the Chair of the Trust Board and send to the Trust office	Chair of the Trust Board * If the complaint is: • Jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or • The entire trust board or • The majority of the trust board Stage 3 will be heard by a completely independent committee panel.
The Chair of the Trust Board	Address the complaint to the Trust Board and send to the Trust office	Vice Chair of the Trust Board
Escalating a stage two complaint to a stage three complaint	In an Academy: Contact the clerk via the academy office At the Trust: Contact the clerk via the Trust office	N/A
Requesting a review of a panel meeting	Email office@suatrust.co.uk	N/A

Complaints about Academy staff

- Complaints against Academy staff are dealt with a senior leader or Headteacher (stage 1), and Headteacher (if investigated by a senior leader) / member of the LAC

(stage 2).
- Complaints against the Headteacher are dealt with by the Chair of the LAC (stage 1) and then a committee of members of the LAC (stage 2).

Complaints about LAC Members
- Complaints against the LAC or any individual LAC members are made to the academy office, the office should then refer the complaint to the Clerk to arrange for the complaint to be heard. This can be done by a suitably skilled and impartial member of the LAC (stage 1) and then a committee of members of the LAC (stage 2)
- Complaints against the entire LAC or complaints involving both the Chair and Vice Chair should also be sent to the academy office, who should refer the complaint to the Clerk to arrange for the complaint to be heard by the Trust Board.

Complaints about Trust staff
- Complaints against Trust staff are dealt with a senior leader or CEO (stage 1), and CEO (if investigated by a senior leader) / member of the Trust Board (stage 2).
- Complaints against the CEO are dealt with by the Chair of the Trust Board (stage 1) and then a committee of members of the Trust Board (stage 2).

Complaints about Trustees
- Complaints against the Trust Board or any individual Trustee are made to the Trust office, the Trust office should then refer the complaint to the Clerk to arrange for the complaint to be heard. This can be done by a suitably skilled and impartial member of the Trust Board (stage 1) and then a committee of members of the Trust Board (stage 2).
- Complaints against the entire Trust Board or complaints involving both the Chair and Vice Chair should also be sent to the Trust office, who should refer the complaint to the Clerk to arrange for the complaint to be heard by an independent panel.

Independent Complaint Panels
If academies arrange complaint panel meetings on an ad-hoc, informal basis, they only need to source governors who are:
- Suitably skilled
- Can demonstrate their independence

They can approach LAC members from any:
- Category of member
- Associate member of another LAC

Details of complaints should not be shared with the whole LAC or Trust Board at any stage while they are still being considered, in case a complaints committee needs to be organised. The exception to this is when a complaint is made against the whole LAC / Trust Board and they need to be aware of the allegations made against them, to respond to any independent investigation.

If the whole LAC / Trust Board is aware of the significant detail of a complaint (that is not collectively against them) before the final stage has been completed, the setting can consider arranging an independent committee to hear the complaint.

If there's any reasonable doubt as to a person's ability to act impartially, they should withdraw from considering the complaint.

Contact details can be found on the relevant Academy and Trust websites.

Complaints campaigns

Where the Trust or an academy becomes the subject of a complaints campaign, from complainants not connected to the Trust, a standard, single response will be shared via appropriate means e.g. via the website.

If the Trust or an academy receives a large number of complaints about the same subject from complainants who are connected to the Trust or an academy, e.g. parents, each complainant will receive an individual response.

If complainants remain dissatisfied with the response, they will be directed to the DfE.

It is essential that any reports and documentation detailing the outcomes and findings following the investigation of a compliant are factual and unbiased.

All investigations should be completed following appropriate consultation with the parties involved to ensure fair representation and equal opportunities to share information to inform the investigation. Reports and communication as to the outcome of a complaint investigation must only be provided following the establishment of all of the relevant factual information.

The investigator must consult with the relevant party or parties, who have sufficient knowledge of the subject, policies and procedures relating to the complaint, regarding factual information to support the response, prior to the outcome of the investigation being issued.

The Trust can be consulted at each stage of the policy to advise on the process of managing a complaint.

Stage One – Informal Complaints

It is to be hoped that most concerns can be expressed and resolved on an informal basis. Concerns should be raised with designated person who will listen to the complaint, investigate and seek support as necessary. Complainants should not approach individual Local Academy Council members to raise concerns or complaints, they have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 3 of the procedure.

The person investigating the concern or complaint should acknowledge the complaint within five school days and advise the complainant how long it is anticipated that their investigation will take depending on the complexity of the concern or complaint but should be no longer than ten school days. If this timescale cannot be met, then the complaint should be notified of this giving a reason for the delay and providing a revised date.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the appropriate person investigating the complaint will provide an informal written response within two school days of the investigation outcome. At this initial communication stage of the complaint, the complainant will be asked for their input as to what they believe may resolve the issue about which the complaint has been made to avoid further escalation where possible.

In line with DfE guidance, complainants should note that any acknowledgement by the Trust or academies that the situation could have been handled better is not an admission of unlawful or negligent action.

If an appropriate resolution cannot be sought at this informal level, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome following the initial discussions, the person managing the

response to the complaint will inform the complainant about the next level of the procedure. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Stage Two – Formal Complaint

Formal complaints must be made in writing, to the designated person, and the Complaints Form in Appendix One must be completed by the complainant.

The designated person will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five school days.

Within this response, the designated person will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The designated person can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

An appointment with the appropriate person for managing the complaint should be made, as soon as reasonably practical.

During the investigation, the investigator will undertake actions which include but are not limited to:

- Interviewing and / or take statements from those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Interviewing and / or take statements from any witnesses or others involved
- Keeping a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation
- Meeting / speaking with the complainant
- Reviewing relevant correspondence and other documents relating to the complaint

The investigator should advise the complainant how long it is anticipated that their investigation will take depending on the complexity of the complaint but should be no longer than ten school days. If this timescale cannot be met, then the complaint should be notified of this giving a reason for the delay and providing a revised date.

Where the appropriate person has made reasonable attempts to accommodate the complainant with dates for a complaint meeting and they refuse or are unable to attend, the meeting will be convened in their absence and a conclusion will be reached in the interests of drawing the complaint to a close.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the investigator will provide a formal written response, including an explanation of the decision, within two school days of the date of the investigation outcome. Any further action that the Trust / Academy plans to take to resolve the issue will be explained to the complainant in writing.

The complainant will be advised of any escalation options (e.g. escalation to stage three) and will be provided with details of this process.

If the investigator is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, a request to escalate to stage three must be made within five school days of the end of stage two, i.e. communication of an outcome.

Interviewing Witnesses

When interviewing pupils to gather information regarding a complaint, the interview should be conducted in the presence of another member of staff or, in the case of serious complaints, e.g. where the possibility of criminal investigation exists, in the presence of their parents. All pupils interviewed will be made fully aware of what the interview concerns and their right to have someone with them. The conduction of interviews must not prejudice an investigation by the LA designated officer (LADO) or the police.

The Trust understands the importance of ensuring a friendly, relaxed and confidential area which is free from intimidation. Staff are allowed a colleague to support them at their interview. The colleague must not be anyone likely to be interviewed themselves, including their line manager. The interviewer will not express opinions in words or attitude, so as to not influence the interviewee.

The interviewee will sign a copy of the transcription of the interview.

Outcomes

After considering the relevant matters and information, the investigation can decide to:

- Uphold the complaint and where appropriate direct that certain action is taken
- Uphold the complaint in part (find an aspect or aspects of the complaint to be valid, but not the whole complaint) and where appropriate direct for certain action is taken
- Dismiss the complaint entirely

Stage Three – Panel Hearing

Where the complaint progresses to stage three, a panel will be constituted to hear the complaint, consisting of at least three individuals who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and at least one independent panel member.

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within five school days. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting; they will aim to convene a meeting within fifteen school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

At least ten school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- Confirm and notify all parties of the date, time and venue of the meeting

- Request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least five school days before the meeting

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Prior to the hearing, the Clerk will write to the complainant, academy and panel attendees, informing them of how the review will be conducted. The Clerk will agree the venue of the panel hearing with all parties, and who will be in attendance. The panel hearing may consist of all parties meeting together, or may be conducted with parties separately on the same day, depending on the circumstances.

Panel Members

Independent panel members will have no clear connection with the setting, such as having conducted work for an academy. If possible, the independent panel member will also have no association with the Trust. Where this is not possible, and the complaint concerns an individual academy, in line with the DfE's guidance, a LAC member serving on the LAC of a different academy within the Trust may occupy this role, as they will be sufficiently separate from the academy being complained about.

The panel members shall not have knowledge of the complaint.

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- The entire Local Academy Council (LAC) or
- The majority of the Local Academy Council (LAC)

Stage 3 will be heard by the Trustees and an independent panel member.

Attendance

A complainant may bring someone along to the panel meeting to provide support. This can be a relative or friend.

Neither party will bring legal representatives to the panel meeting, unless in exceptional circumstances, where this will be agreed beforehand, in accordance with DfE guidance. There may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

Documentation and Evidence

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least five school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

Written materials and evidence may include:

- Documented complaint investigations
- Witness statements
- Responses to the complainant from the investigator
- Written materials and statements from the complainant
- Reports written by the setting
- Evidence from the formal complaint, provided by the setting and / or complainant
- Policies relevant to the complaint

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken and must be signed by all participants being recorded.

At the hearing, all participants will be given the opportunity to put their case across and discuss any issues. The meeting will allow for:

- The complainant to be present and accompanied at the hearing if they wish.
- Academy staff involved in the complaint to be present and accompanied at the hearing if they wish.
- The complainant to explain their complaint and the individual handling the complaint to explain the reasons for their decision.
- The complainant to question the individual handling the complaint, and vice versa, about the complaint.
- Any evidence, including witnesses who have been prior approved by the chair of the panel, to be questioned.
- Members of the panel to question both the complainant and the individual about whom the complaint was made. This can be in one meeting or separate meetings if preferred.
- Final statements to be made by both parties involved.

Academy staff and complainants may attend the meeting separately if required and based on the nature of the complaint.

The hearing will follow the process below:

1. The Chair opens the meeting and explains the procedure to be followed

2. The complainant (or representative) can present their case, including calling any witnesses, and explains what they want to happen as a result of the complaint

3. The academy can present its case, including calling any witnesses

4. The panel considers the information presented and asks the academy, complainant and witnesses any questions

5. All parties withdraw

6. The panel considers the parties' cases and makes a decision

7. A decision letter is drafted following the close of the panel

Outcome

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the academy with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within two school days. The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the academy or Trust will take to resolve the complaint.

The panel will make findings and recommendations, and a copy of those findings and recommendations will be made available for inspection on the academy premises. Where relevant, the person complained about will receive a summary of the panel's findings and recommendations. Minutes will be available, subject to any necessary redactions under and compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education (DfE) if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled.

The panel will ensure that those findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and the setting in which the complaint originated.

Review of Process

The decision of the Stage 3 panel is final; this is the final stage of the procedure. If the complainant is concerned that the complaint procedure has not been followed correctly by an academy, they may write to request a review of the process by a Trust central office employee within 5 school days of receiving the response from the panel meeting.

This can be done by emailing office@suatrust.co.uk stating the reason for the request. The timescale for requesting a review is 15 working days from the receipt of the letter of outcome at Stage 3. On receipt of a request to review an acknowledgement will be sent.

Any review is granted at the discretion of the CEO. The Trust will aim to make this decision and inform complainants of this within 5 school days. If deemed appropriate to proceed to review, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will undertake the work.

This review is provided as a quality assurance exercise to determine whether the process

was followed appropriately and within the scope of its published complaint policy. In carrying out this work the SUAT representative will not re-open the complaint, begin or commission a new investigation or adjust the original determination.

On completion of the review the SUAT representative will provide a written letter of outcome to all parties. The Trust will aim to complete this process within 30 working days.

The SUAT representative may:

- Deem the process to have been sound and uphold the outcome at Stage 3.
- Deem the process to have been procedurally flawed and direct the panel to re-hear the matter at stage 3.

The decision of the SUAT representative is final and binding. Where a panel is directed to re-hear the matter, an independent chair is to be appointed to a new panel of local LAC members and a new timeline established in line with the above Stage 3 procedure.

There can be no further request to review the outcome of a complaint that has been re-directed to the LAC. A copy of the written letter of outcome will be retained on record within the academy and Trust.

The DfE

If the complainant believes the academy / Trust did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law. The complaint should usually be passed to DfE after they have completed Stage 4.

The DfE will consider whether the academy / Trust has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint and whether they have followed Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the DfE:

https://www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe

Contact the Department for Education - Contact type - GOV.UK

The DfE expects complainants to have completed the Trust's complaints procedure before directing a complaint to them. The exceptions to this include when:

- Pupils are at risk of harm.
- Pupils are not getting an education.
- A complainant is being prevented from having their complaint progressed through the Trust's complaints procedure.
- The DfE has evidence that the Trust is proposing to act or is acting unlawfully or unreasonably.

If a social services authority decides to investigate a situation, the Trust may postpone the complaints procedure.

Record Keeping

A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made, regardless of the stage at which they are resolved, including any action taken by the trust as a result of those complaints, whether they are upheld or not.

A written record shall detail:

- The main issues raised, the findings and any recommendations.
- Whether the complaint was resolved following an informal route, formal route or panel hearing.
- Actions taken by the trust as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

The Trust will be informed of complaints which reach stage 2 and 3.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or an inspectorate requests access to them. Records of complaints and related documents will be kept in line with the Data Protection Policy and Retention and Records Management Policy. Personal data will only be kept for as long as necessary. When a pupil changes school, the pupil's educational record will be transferred to the new school and no copies will be kept.

The setting will hold records of complaints separate to pupil records while a complaint is ongoing, so that access to these records can be maintained.

Barring from the Premises

Academy premises are private property and therefore any individual may be barred from entering the premises. If an individual's behaviour is cause for concern, the Headteacher of the relevant academy will ask the individual to leave the premises.

The Headteacher or a Senior Leader will notify the parties involved in writing, explaining that their implied licence for access to the premises has been temporarily revoked and why, subject to any representations that the individual may wish to make. The individual involved will be given the opportunity to formally express their views regarding the decision to bar them.

This decision to bar will be reviewed by the Chair of the LAC, taking into account any discussions following the incident. If the decision is made to continue the bar, the individual will be contacted in writing, informing them of how long the bar will be in place, and when the decision will be reviewed.
Anyone wishing to make a complaint regarding a barring order can do so in writing, following the procedure within this policy.

Appendix 1 - Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the designated contact who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address: **Postcode:** **Day time telephone number:** **Evening telephone number:** **Email address:**
Please give details of your complaint, what action you have already taken to try and resolve the complaint, including whether you have spoken with anyone at the Trust or academy, who this was and what their response was.

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature: **Date:**
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By who:
Complaint referred to:
Action taken:
Complaint resolved at (stage):
Complaint recorded:
Date:

Appendix 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- Explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- Co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- Refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- Providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
    - Sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
    - Interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
    - Consideration of records and other relevant information
    - Analysing information
- Liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- Conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- Ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- Be mindful of the timescales to respond
- Prepare a comprehensive report for the Headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The investigator or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator (this could be the Headteacher / designated complaints LAC member or other staff member providing administrative support, depending on the nature of the complaint)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- Ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- Liaise with staff members, headteacher, chair of governors, clerk and las (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- Be aware of issues regarding:
    - Sharing third party information
    - Additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a

complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- Keep records.

Clerk

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- Collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- Record the proceedings
- Circulate the minutes of the meeting
- Notify all parties of the committee's decision.

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- Both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- The meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- Complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- The remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- Written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- Both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- The issues are addressed
- Key findings of fact are made
- The committee is open-minded and acts independently
- No member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- The meeting is minuted
- They liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- The meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so

- No member may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the setting and the complainant
- We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.
- Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting
- Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting
- Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.
- The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.
- If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.
- The parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.
- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

Appendix 3
Data Protection Complaints

How to make a complaint or raise a concern about data protection matters

Individuals are entitled to make a complaint or raise a concern about how their personal data has been handled, this includes learners within SUAT Academies. A complaint or concern may also be raised by a representative on behalf of a child, where that individual has the authority to act on behalf of the child.

Individuals wishing to raise a concern or complaint about how their data has been handled should get in touch in the following ways. The Complaints Form in Appendix 1 must be used to share information about the complaint and the resolution that is sought:

Concern / complaint	Point of contact	Investigator
Individuals wishing to raise a concern or complaint about how an Academy has used their personal information:	Contact the academy office via the designated email address or phone number on their website. Email the academy data protection lead via the contact information contained within the privacy notice.	Headteacher (which can be delegated to the Data Protection Lead) Chair of the LAC (if the complaint is about the Headteacher)
Individuals wishing to raise a concern or complaint about how the Trust has	Contact the Trust office via the designated email address or phone number on the	Data protection team CEO (if the complaint is

used their personal information:	website.	about the DPO)
Learners wishing to raise a concern or complaint about how their personal data has been used within an Academy:	Contact your Headteacher or Office Manager for help and support	Headteacher (which can be delegated to the Data Protection Lead) Chair of the LAC (if the complaint is about the Headteacher)

The complaint / concern will be managed in three stages:

1. A local investigation shall be undertaken by the setting which the complaint / concern is about, by the relevant leader / LAC member / DPL who is not involved in the original concern / complaint.
2. A review of the investigation shall be undertaken by the DPO / data protection team / CEO where the concern / complaint is escalated within 5 school days.
3. The concern / complaint can be raised with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Supporting information

If the recipient of the complaint requires any further details such as evidence or supporting information, reference numbers, or proof of ID, this will be requested before progressing to investigate the complaint and will be requested at the earliest opportunity.

If someone (e.g. a family member or solicitor) makes a complaint on behalf of another person, the investigator must check that the representative is authorised to act on the complainant's behalf. The form of evidence that the investigator is required to check depends on the circumstances of each request, examples can include:

- Power of attorney; or
- Signed letter of authority from the person they are acting on behalf of.

If there is no evidence that a third party is authorised to act on someone's behalf, the investigator is not required to investigate the complaint, however, will respond to the complainant and the representative where relevant, to explain this.

Acknowledgement

The concern / complaint will be acknowledged within 30 days of receipt.

The concern / complaint should be acknowledged in writing but may be provided in different ways depending on how the concern / complaint is received, for example:

- Data protection complaints received verbally (e.g. over the phone or face-to-face), must be recorded and acknowledged in writing within 30 days of receipt. The Appendix 1 form should be completed by the complainant.
- Data protection complaints received electronically (e.g. through email), should be recorded and an email acknowledgement can be provided. The acknowledgement will be within 30 days of receipt. If complaints are received via social media, the investigator shall ask for an alternative contact method as this is not a secure way to send personal information.
- Data protection complaints received in writing (e.g. by post), can be acknowledged in writing via an email or letter. The acknowledgement will be within 30 days of receipt.

Recipients must maintain a record of the acknowledgement which demonstrates that they have met their obligations within the 30-day timeframe.

Investigating the Complaint

The complaint must be investigated without undue delay. The investigator will make an appropriate and proportionate level of enquiries to be able to be able to be able to respond to the complainant.

Information can be gathered by:

- Reviewing all of the relevant facts thoroughly, fairly and accurately.
- Speaking to relevant members of staff / witnesses.
- Comparing the information from the complaint with the information that is held.
- Reviewing policies and procedures.

If it is unclear as to what the concern or complaint is about, the recipient and investigator shall request more information from the complainant as quickly as possible to help identify which enquiries need to be made. Within Appendix 1, the complainant should detail what outcome they're looking for.

The investigator must keep the person making the complaint updated on the progress of the investigation.

If the investigation is likely to take some time, the investigator should follow up on their initial response to ensure that the complainant knows that the investigator is working to resolve the issue. The investigator should provide the complainant with a date for when they expect to finish their investigation and a point of contact if they have questions.

Resolution

At each stage in the procedure, SUAT wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- An undertaking to review procedures, practice or policies in light of the complaint
- An apology

Records Management

The recipient of the complaint and the investigator shall keep a record of:

- The date they received the data protection concern / complaint
- The concern / complaint
- The acknowledgement and date of acknowledgement
- Any relevant conversations and documents, and information reviewed
- The investigation
- The outcome of the concern / complaint
- The recommendations as a result of the investigation

- Any actions taken as a result of the investigation
- The response to the concern / complaint

This must be retained securely and in line with the Retention and Records Management Policy.

Outcome

Following investigation, the outcome must be discussed with the relevant parties (e.g. senior leaders within the school) and the investigator will provide an outcome to the complaint.

It is essential that any reports and documentation detailing the outcomes and findings following the investigation of a compliant are factual and unbiased. All investigations should be completed following appropriate consultation with the parties involved to ensure fair representation and equal opportunities to share information to inform the investigation. Reports and communication as to the outcome of a complaint investigation must only be provided following the establishment of all of the relevant factual information.

The investigator must consult with the relevant party or parties, who have sufficient knowledge of the subject, policies and procedures relating to the complaint, regarding factual information to support the response, prior to the outcome of the investigation being issued.

The Trust can be consulted to advise on the process of managing a data protection concern / complaint.

The complainant must be informed of the outcome without undue delay. A clear and concise explanation should be provided to advise what has been done to resolve their data protection concern / complaint and, where appropriate, any actions that have or will be taken as a result.

If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome, they have the opportunity to escalate the concern / complaint to the DPO via DPO@suatrust.co.uk.

Escalation

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their concern / complaint must escalate this to the DPO within five school days of receiving the written outcome. This must be undertaken by emailing DPO@suatrust.co.uk.

The DPO will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. They will refer to the completed Appendix 1 of the complaints policy and procedure.

The DPO will review the documentation pertaining to the concern / complaint and identify any further information which would be beneficial to review or discuss to support a review of the outcome. The DPO will document their investigation and findings in line with the Record Management section of this appendix.

After considering the relevant matters and information, the investigation can decide to:

- Uphold the complaint and where appropriate direct that certain action is taken
- Uphold the complaint in part (find an aspect or aspects of the complaint to be valid, but not the whole complaint) and where appropriate direct for certain action is taken

- Dismiss the complaint entirely

The DPO shall keep the person making the complaint updated on the progress of the investigation. If the investigation is likely to take some time, the DPO should follow up on their initial response to ensure that the complainant knows that the DPO is working to review and resolve the matter. The DPO should provide the complainant with a date for when they expect to finish their investigation and contact information should the complainant have any questions about the process. The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the concern / complaint in writing and without undue delay.

The Information Commissioner's Office

Individuals who are dissatisfied regarding the outcome of their concern / complaint have the option to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. This can be undertaken online, using the below link, or by calling: 0303 123 1113.

Make a complaint about how an organisation has used your personal information.

Review

Once an outcome has been provided, the setting in receipt of the complaint should review what has happened in conjunction with the data protection team, considering if there is anything which can be learnt from the matter, areas of development and what can be undertaken to prevent future complaints.

Unreasonable Complaints and Complaint Withdrawals

Data protection complaints which are deemed to be unreasonable will be managed in line with the unreasonable section of this Complaints Policy and Procedure. Complaints which are deemed to be complaint campaigns and duplicate complaints will also be managed in line with the relevant sections of this policy. On withdrawal of the data protection complaint, the withdrawal section of this policy will be followed