



Complaints, Comments & Compliments Policy & Procedure

Responsible for Implementation: Head of Operational Quality

Latest Review Date: December 2021

Next Review Date: July 2022

Authorised By: Chief Operating Officer

About Us

Access to Music Limited ('The College') has subsidiary companies, trading names and trading partnerships through which it operates. The trading names and partnerships might have their own names or brands, but the legal entity for the purpose of this policy is Access to Music Limited. Trading subsidiaries, trading names and trading partnerships include Access Creative College ('ACC'), National College for Creative Industries ('NCCI') and Coaching Connexions.



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Policy Statement

Access Creative College is committed to providing the best possible service for all of its learners (and for visitors and partners). We do however acknowledge that learners can at times feel dissatisfied and are entitled to have their concerns listened to and addressed. In such cases, the college wishes to respond quickly and effectively.

Normally, learners are invited to raise their concerns in the first instance with the appropriate tutors and then with the centre manager as a complaint can often be resolved quickly and simply in this way. However, if learners are not satisfied with the response made by the centre manager, or do not wish to use this route, they may make a formal complaint instead.

With regards to learners studying on HE programmes validated by Nottingham and Trent University, following initial complaints raised in line with the Access Creative College procedures, which remain unresolved, then appropriate escalation routes are via NTU in accordance with their arrangements, the details of which can be found [here](#).

The procedure for making a complaint is set out below and is also presented in a user-friendly guide, entitled: [‘How to make a formal complaint, comment or compliment’](#). This can be emailed or posted to learners/parents on request.



Application

These procedures are primarily for the use of all learners (or their parents or guardians) of the college. In addition, they may be also used by any visitors or partners who make permitted use of college services, facilities and premises. In most circumstances, any staff wishing to initiate a complaint should use other, appropriate People Services procedures.

Procedure for Formal Complaints

Step	Process	Who
1.	If a learner, their parent or guardian, visitor or partner wishes to make a formal complaint, comment or compliment, they can complete either an email ccc.admin@accesstomusic.ac.uk or complete a CCC form. Learners, their parents or guardians, visitors or partners may also submit a complaint, comment or compliment by letter. The complaint should be addressed to the Complaints, Comments and Compliments (CCC) Department.	Learner/ parent or guardian/ visitor/partner Making a formal complaint, comment or compliment
2.	All formal complaints (including any sent by letter, email or via phone call) sent via reception are logged, and then sent to the CCC Administrator for further action. This will include sending a standard acknowledgement/holding email to the complainant. Complaints addressed to the Head of Quality and Compliance are similarly logged and passed to the CCC Administrator.	Reception staff; CCC Administrator
3.	The CCC Administrator will send an acknowledgement email to the complainant within five working days. Any complainants who specifically request the full CCC Policy and Procedures should also be sent this document. If a complaint has been submitted via email in the first instance, the CCC Administrator can confirm receipt of the complaint via email instead of a letter, and continue corresponding with the complainant via email, if this is the complainant's preference.	CCC Administrator
4.	A copy of the customer's complaint form/letter/ email/phone transcript, and any previous information pertaining to the complaint will be sent by the CCC Administrator to be investigated and resolved by the Head of Quality and Compliance.	CCC Administrator



5.	Upon receipt of the complaint, the Head of Quality and Compliance will respond to acknowledge that they will be investigating the complaint. They may request to interview the relevant parties as appropriate and examine any evidence (including student records data, email communications, or other written records, as appropriate to the complaint). The investigator will also review any systems relevant to the complaint.	CCC Administrator
6.	The investigator might require access to sensitive personal data (under the Data Protection Act and GDPR compliance) in order to arrive at a sound conclusion. The investigator will handle such information with due regard to its sensitivity, only sharing it with any others who need to know it as part of the investigation. The complainant submitting a formal complaint should be aware that the above information will be made available under these conditions as part of an investigation.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ Investigator
7.	The investigator will endeavour to complete the investigation within 15 working days, and then issue a letter (or email if preferred) to the complainant, which summarises the conclusions or outcomes. This letter/email should also state that the investigation is both complete and now regarded as closed (using the wording in the sample letter/email). Note - If the investigation is found to be taking longer to complete, the investigator must send an interim letter or email to the complainant, summarising progress and ongoing action, within the said 15 working days. Copies of written responses must also be sent to the Head of Quality and Compliance to inform the tracking process.	Head of Quality and Compliance / Investigator
8.	If the complainant still regards the matter as unresolved, but presents no information meriting further investigation, the investigator then writes to advise the complainant of how to appeal (see sample letter/email).	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
9.	At the conclusion of the complaint, the investigator will return their report to the CCC Administrator, together with all other documentation relevant to the investigation. The CCC Administrator will retain all documentation relating to the complaint, such that it can be easily retrieved if required for an Appeal. The CCC Administrator reviews the returned documentation and, if complete, sends this to the Head of Quality and Compliance to be signed off.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator



Appeals

10.	The complainant may appeal against a decision if they regard the complaint as still unresolved. The complainant should appeal in writing to the CCC Administrator within 15 working days from the date that the final response was sent by the college. The letter/email/phone call of appeal must indicate what the complainant's reasons are for appealing against the investigator's conclusions.	Complainant CCC Administrator
11.	The Head of Quality and Compliance will review the documentation, via an appeals panel or the ELT. This review will consider whether or not the investigation has been fair, sufficiently thorough, and proportionate in its judgements. It will not involve a re-hearing of the complaint, nor a meeting with the complainant unless the investigation is found to have been unsatisfactory and further investigatory work is required.	CCC Manager
12.	The Head of Quality and Compliance will review the documentation, via an appeals panel if necessary. This review will consider whether or not the investigation has been fair, sufficiently thorough, and proportionate in its judgements. It will not involve a re-hearing of the complaint, nor a meeting with the complainant unless the investigation is found to have been unsatisfactory and further investigatory work is required.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
13.	The decision of the Head of Quality and Compliance / investigator/appeals panel will be sent to the complainant within 15 working days, and copied to the CCC Administrator. This decision will be final.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator



14.	If the complainant is still dissatisfied, they can write to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This should only be done after all stages of the college's complaints and subsequent appeals processes have been exhausted. Note - For students engaged on HE programmes validated by Nottingham and Trent University, following initial complaints raised in line with the Access Creative College procedures, which remain unresolved, then appropriate escalation routes are via NTU in accordance with their arrangements, the details of which can be found via the following link: https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/resources/student_handbook/complaints_summary/index.html	Learner/parent
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Information Requests and Data Subject Access Requests

15.	Our DSAR / Information Request policy and form is available by emailing dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk . Any requests for information / formal DSAR received by a member of staff must be forwarded without delay to dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk .	Learner/parent CCC Administrator Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
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Complaint Reporting (Office Use Only)

16.	A complaint report will be prepared annually to review complaint trends by cause, site, ethnicity and disability. The complaint report will also be submitted to the Head of Quality and Compliance at the end of each academic year for consideration.	CCC Administrator Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
17.	Improvement measures recommended by the investigator will be shared by the investigator with the relevant managers, for action and/or to feed their self-assessment process.	CCCManager



Compliments

18.	Any compliments received verbally may be logged and, together with those received by letter, email or phone call, should be forwarded to the CCC Administrator. Details of compliments will be shared with relevant members of staff.	CCC Administrator
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