

SPTA Complaints Policy - Key points

- The SPTA complaints policy applies to all stakeholder complaints, whether Academy related or SPTA related except for Child Protection, Exclusions and Appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications, to which separate procedures apply.
- Complaints should be dealt with at the lowest possible level appropriate to the subject of the complaint and by informal means wherever possible.
- If informal procedures fail to resolve the issue, a formal complaint about any matter not involving child protection allegations, internal assessment decisions or a decision to exclude a student, must be given verbally or in writing :
 - to the Principal or EAB Chair for Academy related issues
 - to the Corporate Affairs Department for SPTA issues.
- Complainants should also outline how they wish their complaint to be resolved.
- Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential unless disclosure is required in the course of any Academy inspection or where any other legal obligation prevails. These records will be retained for one year after the individual leaves the organisation.
- The Complaints Policy is to be made available on SPTA website and also via individual Academy websites.
- Appendix 1 contains a template complaints form
- A link to Department for Education's procedure for dealing with complaints about Academies is included.
- A summary report of complaints made under the policy should be provided to the EAB for Academy related complaints and to the SPTA Board of Directors for SPTA related complaints on an annual basis,

Process overview - Four stage process

- **Stage One – Informal resolution**
 - Aim for informal resolution where possible.
 - Written record to be maintained by appropriate responsible person.
 - Up to ten days to resolve.
- **Stage Two – Formal resolution**
 - Complaint should be made in writing to Principal, relevant Executive Leadership member or EAB Chair.
 - Principal, relevant Executive Leadership member or EAB Chair to speak to or meet complainant within 10 working days.
 - Written record to be maintained.
 - Outcome to be communicated to the complainant within 10 days of the conversation/meeting.
- **Stage Three- Appeal**
 - Complainant to request in writing further consideration of their formal complaint within 10 working days of the Stage Two decision.
 - Stage Three Appeal Panel for Academy related complaints to consist of two Education Advisory Body members who have not previously been involved in the complaint and one person independent of the management and running of the Academy.
 - The process for selecting an independent person will conform to DfE guidance.
 - Stage Three Appeal Panel for SPTA related complaints to consist of Chief Executive and ELT member not previously involved with the complaint.
 - Written record to be maintained.

- Outcome to be communicated to the complainant within 10 days of the conversation/meeting.
- **Stage Four (Academy complaints only)**
 - Complainant to refer complaint to SPTA in writing within 10 working days of completion of the Stage Three appeal
 - Panel will consider whether the Academy has complied with the complaints procedure
 - Panel made up of Chief Executive and one other member of the Board of Directors to meet no later than 20 school days after receipt of complaint, subject to Panel member availability
 - Outcome to be communicated to the complainant within 10 days of the Stage Four Panel meeting

SPTA Complaints policy – Sept 14 update

Three updates have been made to stage three of the complaints procedure to mirror the requirements in the Ofsted checklist – P29/30:

- The Academy will inform parents/carers, in writing, that they can attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, be accompanied.
- A secure and **confidential** record of all complaints, decisions and findings will be kept for one (1) year after the individual leaves the organisation.
- All records will be made available for inspection and indicate whether the complaint was resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.