

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Purpose

Amala hopes that everyone who comes into contact with the organisation and our programmes will have a positive experience, and we aim to provide the very best services in all of our work. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be concerns that give rise to complaints, and which may require investigation. We want to know about these concerns so that we can improve for the future, and put things right for the person (or organisation) who has made the complaint.

Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to ensure that concerns are dealt with sympathetically, constructively and efficiently. This policy outlines the procedure for Amala students, significant adults and other stakeholders to make a complaint and what to do if they are not satisfied with the response.

Procedures

To make a complaint, please follow the following procedures:

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

In line with Amala's ethos and culture, we will seek to resolve complaints informally through dialogue with the person responsible for the complaint. Where possible, an appropriate resolution should be sought in this way. Complaints should be raised as soon as possible and will normally not be considered after three months.

All complaints and any responses will be logged, noting the date, details and the outcome of the complaint. This will include whether they were resolved at the informal stage or whether they proceeded to formal stages.

There are four possible outcomes to most complaints:

- A complaint is resolved through clarification.
- There is agreement that a complaint is valid and a course of action is agreed.
- There is no or insufficient evidence to substantiate the complaint and the matter is closed with no further action recommended.
- The complaint is escalated to the next stage due to an inability to agree.

If there is no resolution within ten working days, the complaint should be escalated to Stage 2.

Please note that if the nature of the concern relates to the welfare or wellbeing of an Amala student, the Safeguarding and Welfare Policy and reporting procedures detail how to report such concerns and incidents.

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Approved by: Amala Board of Trustees

Effective from: 1 February 2018

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Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If a complaint has not been resolved informally, it should be put in writing to the Co Executive Director (Mia Eskelund Pedersen, mia@amalaeducation.org)*. The Co Executive Director will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and take action to investigate. Aspects of the investigation may be delegated to other team members who are not implicated in the complaint.

The Co Executive Director will keep written records of all correspondence, meetings, interviews and decisions taken in relation to the complaint.

Amala aims to respond to all complaints within 15 working days, but will communicate to the complainant where that is not possible.

The response to the complaint will include the actions taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigations and any action taken as a result of the complaint. Normally, the Co Executive Director will arrange a meeting with the complainant(s) to go through their conclusions before they receive a written response.

*If a complaint relates to Mia Eskelund Pedersen, the complaint should be sent to the People, Culture and Operations Coordinator (Chloë Cupid, chloe@amalaeducation.org).

Stage 3 - Formal Resolution - Board of Trustees' Review

If a complaint has not been resolved through Stage 1 or 2, it can be taken to the Board of Trustees in writing within 15 working days of receiving the response from Stage 2.

The complaint should be written to the Chair of the Board (Keith Clark, keith@amalaeducation.org)** who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Chair will assess the complaint and form a panel to review the previous stages. The panel will consist of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Usually, the Chair of the Panel will be a member of the Board of Trustees.

The Chair of the Panel will schedule a meeting of the panel to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 15 working days. Further information or investigation may be needed prior to the panel meeting. The panel will consider all relevant facts and all parties shall be given a fair hearing. All written evidence will be circulated to all parties before the meeting.

The panel will write to the complainant(s) informing them of their findings and recommendations and the reasons behind it within five days of the panel meeting. All parties will also receive a copy. The decision of the panel will be final.

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**If the complaint relates to Keith Clark, the complaint should be sent to the Treasurer Colin Habgood (colin@amalaeducation.org)

Communication

Amala's Complaints Policy and Procedures will be published on the organisation's Knowledge Management System, the Amala Brain and on its website so that it is publicly available to students, significant adults and other stakeholders who use our services.

Relevant policies and procedures

Team Code of Conduct

Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns Procedures

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns Against Amala Staff Procedures

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