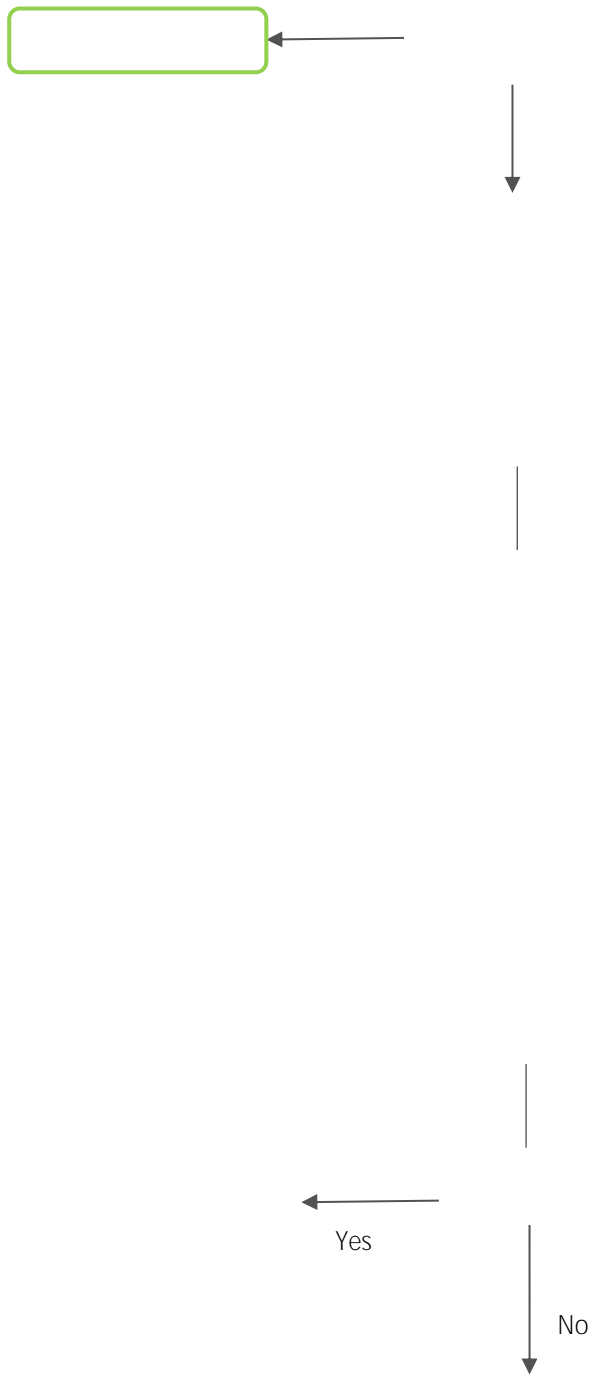


This policy is effective for all schools within The Mead Educational Trust, The Mead Institute of Professional Learning, The Mead Institute Apprenticeships, the Teaching School Hub, the SCITT, and all other activities under the control of the Trust and reporting to the Trust Board.

	11.0
	October 2024
	Board of Trustees
	29 th October 2024
	October 2026 (every 2 years)

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This sets out the overall process. See Appendix A for a full description of each stage.



A complainant may withdraw their complaint at any time during the process and should confirm this in writing.

All documentation relating to a complaint, including correspondence, statements and records 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).

All information relating to a complaint will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Should a complaint relate to a member of staff, then that person shall be advised of the complaint made against them, unless there is an overriding reason why this would be inappropriate.

We accept the use of AI tools to assist with minuting meetings relating to complaints, under specific conditions to ensure data security and confidentiality. For full details on when and how AI can be used, please refer to the 'Using AI to Minute Meetings' protocol.

TMET and each of its schools will maintain a written record of all complaints concerning them, including whether they are resolved following a Stage 1 investigation or proceed to a Stage 2 panel hearing, the date on which they were received, their final outcome and details of the action taken by the Trust/school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld).

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available upon request.

The Trust Complaints Team records details of all complaints about TMET schools and the Trust that reach Stage 2 (Complaints Appeal Panel). The Trust Complaints Team monitors the response to, and outcomes of, such complaints. The number of formal complaints is recorded on the Trust and school Data Dashboards which are updated three times a year. This enables the monitoring of the number of formal complaints by the academy councils, Trust Executive Team and the Board.

If, after closing a complaint at the end of the complaints procedure, a duplicate complaint is

grandparent or child), the new complainant will be informed that the complaint has been considered and that the local process is complete. The new complainant will be advised to contact the ESFA if they are dissatisfied with the handling of the original complaint.

If the school/Trust receives large volumes of complaints all based on the same subject and/or from complainants unconnected with the school/Trust, we may address the complaints by:

The complaint will be acknowledged within _____ of receipt of the formal complaint by the school or Trust Complaints Team.

If the complaint is unclear, the principal (or Trust representative) will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. A face-to-face meeting may be the most appropriate way of doing this.

If, after this, the complaint remains unclear, the principal (or Trust representative) may not proceed with an investigation into the complaint. In such a case, this will be communicated to the complainant.

The principal (or Trust representative) will investigate the complaint or may delegate the investigation to another member of staff. S

to the meeting as it is not a legal hearing. However, there may be occasions when legal

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 ESFA online at:

www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit

Education and Skills Funding Agency

Cheylesmore House

5 Quinton Road

Coventry

CV1 2WT

Please complete and return to the appropriate person via the school/Trust office

Your name:	
Pupil's name (if relevant):	
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):	
Your address:	
Postcode:	
Daytime telephone number:	
Evening telephone number:	
Email address:	
Please state whether your complaint concerns a school (if so please name the school) the Trust, The Mead Institute of Professional Learning, its Apprenticeships, the Teaching School Hub or the SCITT:	
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school/Trust/ The Mead Institute /Teaching School Hub/SCITT about it (who and when) whether you have taken any actions to try to resolve it the outcomes of these discussions/actions	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signature:	Date:
Date form received:	Date acknowledgment sent:
Received by:	Acknowledgment sent by:
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	

publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with the school/Trust 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 in the school/Trust who is dealing with the complaint will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking to the complaint.

If the behaviour continues, the individual in the school/Trust who is dealing with the complaint will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable. They will also explain that if the behaviour continues the school/Trust may specify methods of communication e.g. restrict the individual to a single point of contact via email, limit the number of contacts in a communication plan or take the decision stop responding. This will usually be reviewed after six months.

The decision to stop responding will never be taken lightly. Before the school/Trust stops responding to a complainant who submits unreasonable complaints, we will need to be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Have we taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns?
- Has the complainant been given a clear statement of our position and their options?
- Does the complainant contact us repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time?

We will also consider the following points:

- Are the individual's letters, emails, or telephone calls often or always abusive or aggressive?
- Does the individual make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff?
- Do we believe that the individual is contacting us with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience?

The investigation of an allegation or a complaint should always be carried out thoroughly and responsibly, irrespective of whether the complaint appears to be trivial or serious. The outcome of such an investigation will have significance not only for the complainant but also for any member of staff against whom a complaint has been made.

The investigation of a complaint, including writing to the complainant confirming the outcome of the investigation, will take place within _____ of receipt of the written formal complaint. If the investigator is unable to meet the timescale of 10 school days

should be given the opportunity to provide other relevant information at the end of the interview. Interviewees should, however, be advised that their responses must be confined to the substance of the complaint. Any attempt by the interviewee to introduce information relating to other members of staff or to issues unrelated to the complaint should be resisted.

The investigator should avoid reaching conclusions or passing judgement until the investigation has been completed.

Following the investigation of the complaint, the investigator will write to the complainant confirming the outcome of the investigation within _____ of receiving the written formal complaint. If the investigator is unable to meet the timescale of 10 school days, they will provide the complainant with an update and a revised response date.

The investigator's response will include the following information:

- a summary of the complaint/concern
- a brief outline of the process that has been followed
- the outcome of the investigation
- the reasons for that outcome, unless confidentiality would be compromised
- any recommendations for future action
- information as to the next stage of the procedure in case the complainant is not satisfied with the response.