

## TEDI-LONDON

### STUDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

<b>Summary</b>	This Policy outlines the process for submitting and dealing with student complaints.		
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Registrar		
<b>Policy Sponsor</b>	Academic Board		
<b>Policy applies to</b>	All students of TEDI-London. TEDI-London staff involved in dealing with complaints.		
<b>Equality impact assessment completed</b>	August 2021		
<b>Version</b>	3		
<b>Date of implementation</b>	September 2021	<b>Date of next formal review</b>	September 2022

#### DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
03/02/2020	1	Policy issued	n/a
04/02/2021	2	Updates to align with OIA Good Practice Guide	Amendments made to outline what is not covered in this policy, provide clarity on timelines, outline the impact of legal proceedings on a complaint and accurately reflect the role of staff in the procedure.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. We want you to have a positive experience at TEDI-London, but we appreciate that there are times when things may not run smoothly, and you want to submit a complaint.
- 1.2. In most cases, we expect and aim to resolve problems at an early opportunity and in the simplest way. Our process includes an Early Resolution stage, a Formal Complaint stage, and a Review stage. You may find it helpful to refer to the Student Complaints Flowchart [\[link\]](#) for an overview of the process.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 2.1. We seek to minimise student complaints by ensuring that you have opportunities to participate in our formal decision-making processes through our Student Engagement Policy [\[link\]](#) which includes the opportunity to be part of our committees and the ability to feedback on all aspects of your programme and experience of TEDI-London.
- 2.2. Student Complaints are handled in accordance with our Academic Regulations [\[link\]](#) and this Policy adheres to guidance from the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education \(OIA\)](#).
- 2.3. We are committed to learning from Student Complaints, and to identifying enhancements to the overall student experience wherever possible.

## **3. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

- 3.1. This Policy covers all students of TEDI-London. For the purpose of this process, a student is defined a student registered for an award of TEDI-London, or an alumnus who has been registered with TEDI-London within the last six months.
- 3.2. The following will not normally be considered under this policy:
  - Complaints about student conduct. This should be considered under the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#).
  - Complaints that are considered frivolous or vexatious. This includes academic complaints that are obsessive, harassing, or repetitive; unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes requested; designed to cause disruption or

annoyance; outcomes requested have no serious purpose of value.

- 3.3. Where legal proceedings are happening in relation to the complaint, the complaint will be placed on hold until legal proceedings are completed.

#### **4. DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY**

- 4.1. We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more of our students about our action or inaction, or about the standard of services provided by us or on our behalf.
- 4.2. There is a separate Policy for [Student Discipline](#), under which we outline how we will manage concerns about student behaviour or conduct. This Student Complaints Policy is intended to enable students to make a complaint about TEDI-London.
- 4.3. There is a separate [Academic Appeals Policy](#) for issues relating to assessment, progression or award and a separate process for dealing with admissions complaints, within the [Admissions Policy](#). We also have separate processes for dealing with issues relating to complaints made about any form of [bullying, harassment, or victimisation](#).
- 4.4. We may reclassify your Complaint as an Academic Appeal or vice versa if we believe that the submission should be within the remit of the other procedure. The outcome of an Academic Appeal cannot be made the subject of a Complaint unless there was a material error made when arriving at the decision.

#### **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 5.1. You are responsible for submitting your Complaint on the correct form and within the correct timeframe. You should also ensure that all necessary evidence is included.
- 5.2. The Assistant Registrar – Education will be responsible for receiving Formal Complaints and for allocating these to be investigated.
- 5.3. Your complaint, from the Formal Complaints Stage forward, will be considered by someone who is impartial. This may mean involving members of staff from other Higher Education providers.

- 5.4. The final decision regarding a matter raised under this Complaints Policy or any of the associated Policies will be the final decision of TEDI-London; there is no right to further consideration of the same matter under a different associated Procedure, Policy or Process.

## **6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 6.1. This Procedure will be operated in accordance with TEDI-London's [Equal Opportunities Statement](#).
- 6.2. We will not treat you less favourably and you will not or suffer any detriment or disadvantage if you make a complaint in good faith, regardless or not of whether the complaint is successful. We will not treat any member of staff named in a complaint less favourably.

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 7.1. Complaints will be handled with an appropriate level of confidentiality, with information released only to those who need it for the purposes of investigating or responding to a complaint.
- 7.2. Where it is necessary to obtain information from a third party in relation to the investigation, we will only give them as much detail about the complaint as is necessary to obtain the information required from them.
- 7.3. You will be informed if a complaint you have raised against another student, or a member of staff is upheld. We may not share specific details; particularly where disciplinary action is being taken.

## **8. REASONABLE CONDUCT**

- 8.1. Staff and students are expected to act reasonably and fairly towards each other and respect the Complaints Policy. We have a responsibility to protect our community against unacceptable behaviour, and disciplinary action will be taken as necessary.

- 8.2. Complaints that are submitted anonymously will not be considered and complaints that are found to be unsubstantiated will be dismissed.
- 8.3. Vexatious or malicious complaints will not be considered. These are defined as complaints which are trivial or untrue, having been put forward to abuse the Complaints Process or, for example, to attempt to defame the name or character of another person or of TEDI-London. If a complaint is vexatious or pursued inappropriately, disciplinary action may be taken against you and the consideration of that complaint will be terminated.

## **9. COMPLAINTS TIMEFRAMES**

- 9.1. You should make an Informal or Formal Complaint within 20 working days of the incident that is being complained about, or the final event on the series where appropriate.
- 9.2. We will resolve any issues raised under the Informal Complaints Stage within 15 working days of your initial approach. We will respond to Formal Complaints within 20 working days of submission, and to Complaint Reviews within 20 working days.
- 9.3. Timescales may need to be extended if the case being considered is complex. You will be kept informed of any delays to the process throughout.

## **10. GROUP COMPLAINTS**

- 10.1. We will consider group complaints where an issue has affected a group. The group should nominate one student to act as the representative.
- 10.2. We will liaise with the representative who should communicate with the rest of the group in relation to the complaint as appropriate.

## **11. STAGE 1: INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

- 11.1. We hope that most Complaints can be resolved informally, without the need for a Formal Complaint to be submitted.

- 11.2. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your experience at TEDI-London, you should raise this with a relevant person at the earliest opportunity. If your complaint relates to your registration or fee status, you should approach the Registrar.
- 11.3. The relevant person might be a person you wish to complain about. In these cases, you should speak to their manager.
- 11.4. The person you approach about the complaint will listen to and discuss the nature of the complaint. They will not carry out a formal investigation, but they can advise on how the matter could be resolved and will usually keep informal notes.
- 11.5. If the complaint requires a more thorough investigation or is particularly complex, you may be referred to the Formal Complaint process.

## **12. STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT**

- 12.1. If it has not been possible to reach an acceptable solution and you are dissatisfied with the outcome, or you feel that an Informal Complaint is not appropriate in the situation, you may wish to submit a Formal Complaint.
- 12.2. Formal Complaints should be submitted on the form [\[link\]](#).
- 12.3. You can submit evidence with your Complaint submission. This should be appended to your form. The evidence should normally be valid and capable of verification. All evidence should be written in English or, if not, certifiably translated.
- 12.4. Formal Complaints should be submitted within 20 working days of the incident complained about or the last event in a series of incidents. Complaints received after this deadline will only be accepted at the discretion of the Assistant Registrar - Education.
- 12.5. The Assistant Registrar - Education will appoint an Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer will be someone who has had no previous involvement with your case.

- 12.6. The Investigating Officer will review the circumstances of the complaint, as well as considering TEDI-London's procedures. The investigation may involve interviewing you and/or others directly involved, as well as seeking opinion and information from anyone with an interest in, or knowledge of, the matter being complained about.
- 12.7. The Investigating Officer will consider the merits of the complaint and decide whether this should be upheld in part or in full. They will make proposals for the resolution of the complaint and may recommend further appropriate action.
- 12.8. The Investigating Officer will communicate their decision to you in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the Formal Complaint.

### **13. STAGE 3: COMPLAINT REVIEW**

- 13.1. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint following the Formal Complaint stage, you have the right to request a Complaint Review.
- 13.2. The Complaint Review request should be submitted on the form [\[link\]](#).
- 13.3. A Complaint Review may only be requested under one or both of the following grounds:
  - a. that there is new evidence that could not have been, or for good reason was not, made available at the time of the investigation of the Formal Complaint, and that enough evidence remains that the complaint warrants further consideration
  - b. that evidence can be produced of significant procedural error on the part of TEDI-London in investigating the complaint, and that enough evidence remains that the complaint warrants further consideration.
- 13.4. You should submit the Complaint Review request within 10 working days of the Formal Complaint outcome. Complaint Review requests received after this deadline will only be accepted at the discretion of the Assistant Registrar - Education.



- 13.5. The Complaint Review will be considered by the Assistant Registrar - Education. The Review will consider whether the outcome of the Formal Complaint was reasonable, rather than reconsider the Formal Complaint.
- 13.6. The Assistant Registrar - Education will advise you in writing of their decision on the Complaint Review within 20 working days of receipt.
- 13.7. If the Assistant Registrar - Education believes that the complaint warrants further investigation, it will be investigated as per the Formal Complaint stage of this process.
- 13.8. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued at the end of the Complaint Review Stage.

#### **14. EXTERNAL REVIEW**

- 14.1. Once our internal procedures have been concluded, if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Complaint Review, you have the option to apply to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education](#) for an external review of our decision.

#### **15. COMPENSATION AND REFUNDS**

- 15.1. You are entitled to request compensation or a refund of fees if your complaint is upheld. Requests should be made using the [Compensation and Refund Policy](#).

#### **16. TRAINING, DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

- 16.1. All TEDI-London staff will be made aware of this Policy at induction.
- 16.2. The Policy is available on the TEDI-London website, and it will be highlighted to students when they join.

#### **17. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 17.1. Academic Board will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy by considering key indicators of number of formal complaints, timescales for their resolution, and appeals and OIA requests submitted.

17.2. This version of the Policy is valid from September 2021 and will be reviewed by the Registrar, with any amendments recommended to Academic Board in September 2024.