



COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS & CONCERNS PROCEDURE

Updated September 2017
Approved by the Principal

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Assessment and IV Policy
- Learning and Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At Big Creative Academy we want to provide an outstanding educational experience and an excellent service. One of the ways in which we can improve what we do is by listening and responding to your views. The Academy values the feedback that students provide and complaints are monitored, evaluated and reported on regularly to the Governing Body.
- 1.2 We aim to provide you with any guidance and support you may need to complete our complaints, compliments and concerns procedure and we aim to resolve matters quickly. If you need any help, please see the Executive Assistant, Victoria Spence (victoria.spence@bigcreative.education, 0208 498 3304).
- 1.3 Where concerns are raised the Academy intends for these to be dealt with:
- Fairly
 - Openly
 - Promptly
 - Without Prejudice

In order to do so, the following procedure explains what you should do if you have any concerns about the school. All members of staff will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to assist you.

2. Raising concerns

- 2.1 The majority of concerns can be dealt with without resorting to this procedure. Where you have a concern about any aspect of the Academy please raise this with your tutor. Ideally, they will be able to address your concerns on the spot, or can arrange a meeting with you to discuss the issue.
- 2.2 All concerns will be dealt with confidentially, although the staff member may need to take notes if they feel that the matter may need to be taken further or it may arise again in the future. Any such notes will be kept in accordance with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation. However, such notes would be able to be used to as evidence if further investigation was required, or if the concern became a formal complaint.

2.3 If your complaint is about your tutor please see the Director of Curriculum, Cyrus Armstrong-James.

3. Complaints and Concerns

3.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of a service or facility provided by Big Creative Academy to enrolled students.

3.2 Complaints can only be made by students who are currently enrolled on a course at Big Creative Academy.

3.3 We will not normally accept complaints from:

- Ex-students unless the complaint is received within four weeks of the end date of the course.
- Students who wish to raise complaints anonymously.
- Third parties on behalf of students e.g. parents/guardians/employers.

3.4 Students are expected to bring their complaints themselves. Big Creative Academy will allow third parties to bring complaints in very limited circumstances where the senior management team (SMT) considers it reasonable to do so e.g. where a student has a learning difficulty and/or disability. In such cases, Big Creative Academy will require the prior written consent of the student.

3.5 Big Creative Academy reserves the right not to accept complaints (e.g. where a complaint is judged by SMT to be frivolous, vexatious or malicious).

3.6 We aim to respond to complaints and concerns within 15 working days.

3.7 Separate procedures exist for:

- Academic appeals relating to assessment decisions covered by the Assessment and IV Policy.
- Disciplinary issues, covered by the Learning and Behaviour Policy. You are unable to use this policy to complain about an issue which relates to a breach of the Learning and Behaviour Policy.
- Complaints relating to bullying and harassment covered by the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

3.8 Copies of the above procedures are available online on the Big Creative Academy website. Copies are also available in the Student Services area or Reception.

4. Formal Complaints Procedure

4.1 If your complaint has not been resolved using the informal complaints procedure, or if it is inappropriate to use the informal procedure because the complaint is of a serious nature, you may make a formal complaint.

4.2 Formal complaints must be made in writing (hard copy or email) addressed to the Principal, Sacha Corcoran and submitted to the Executive Assistant, Victoria Spence (victoria.spence@bigcreative.education, 0208 498 3304). Your written complaint should include clear detailed reasons for your complaint, an indication of the resolution or outcome you seek and copies of any documents upon which you wish to rely.

- 4.3 The Executive Assistant administers the formal complaint process and will acknowledge, monitor and respond to your complaint in writing. All complaints will be recorded and logged with dates, actions and will remain confidential.
- 4.4 Big Creative Academy aims to acknowledge, investigate and report on the outcome of your formal complaint and any resulting action within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint. These timescales may be extended in certain circumstances e.g. where the issues raised by a complaint are serious, or to take account of holidays. You can normally expect the following process:
- (a) Complaint acknowledged: your complaint to be acknowledged by a member of the senior management team within 5 working days of receipt.
 - (b) Complaint investigation, outcome and action: An investigation of your complaint to be undertaken by a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). The manager may in his/her discretion meet with you to discuss the complaint, your concerns and the resolution or outcome you seek. The manager may also meet with other individuals as part of the investigation if appropriate e.g. individuals who may be witnesses. The manager will reach a determination of your complaint and report the outcome of your complaint and any resulting action to the Principal. Big Creative Academy aims to complete this stage within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint.
 - (c) Complaint response: A member of the SMT will respond to you in writing informing you of the outcome of your complaint and any resulting action. The Academy aims to provide a written response to you within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint.

5. Review of Formal Complaints

- 5.1 Big Creative Academy aims to investigate and resolve all complaints in a fair and reasonable manner. If you are not satisfied with the outcome or any action taken relating to your formal complaint you have the right to request a review. This will be granted on one or more of the following grounds:
- (a) that new material evidence has come to light, which was not reasonably available at the time of the complaint investigation.
 - (b) that you believe the outcome of the complaint was manifestly unreasonable and or any resulting action was disproportionate.
 - (c) that the Complaints Procedure was not followed. Your request for a review must be made in writing to the Principal within 10 working days of the date of Big Creative Academy's written response to your complaint. You must explain clearly the reasons for your request for a review including the grounds upon which it is based and enclose copies of all the documents you wish to rely upon.
- 5.2 A member of SMT not previously involved in the complaint will undertake a review along with other panel members, one of whom will not be employed directly by Big Creative Academy and invite you in for a panel hearing. You are allowed to bring someone to the panel meeting with you for support.
- 5.3 In coming to a decision on a review, he/she may consider as appropriate the documents relating to the complaint and the information provided in your request for a review.
- 5.4 The senior manager may meet with other individuals as part of the review; this may include individuals named in your complaint or request for a review and Academy personnel involved in your complaint.

6. Review outcome

6.1 The outcome of a review will be either to:

- (a) uphold the complaint outcome and/or any action.
- (b) substitute an alternative outcome and/or action.

6.2 You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review normally within five working days of it being decided upon by the senior manager. The decision of the senior manager is final and Big Creative Academy will not further consider your complaint.

7. Next Steps

7.1 Following the conclusion of a review, you may be able to take the matter further with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-post-16-efa-funded-institutions/how-to-complain-about-post-16-efa-funded-institutions>

8. Compliments

8.1 Compliments for the Academy are gratefully received and should be addressed to the Principal, Sacha Corcoran and submitted to the Executive Assistant. They will be formally acknowledged and recorded centrally.

9. Contacts

9.1 The Executive Assistant is Victoria Spence and can be contacted by email on

victoria.spence@bigcreative.education or by telephone on 0208 498 3304. The postal address is Big Creative Academy, Clifton Avenue, Walthamstow, London E17 6HL.