

ACE TEFL Complaints Policy and Procedure

1. Goals

ACE TEFL is committed to providing a quality service for its students and clients and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. In our effort to continue to improve our services, we place emphasis on listening and responding to the views of our students, clients and stakeholders, and in particular on responding positively to complaints, and putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

2. General Guidelines

Definition: ACE TEFL defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction (with ACE TEFL, with a member of staff, or with an ACE TEFL Director) that relates to ACE TEFL and that requires a formal response'.

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

ACE TEFL's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to ACE TEFL's attention normally within six weeks of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in ACE TEFL;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow ACE TEFL a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond ACE TEFL's control.

Responsibility for Action: All Staff, and Directors of ACE TEFL.

Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and ACE TEFL maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant in advance of any action being taken by an ACE TEFL member of staff.

3. ACE TEFL Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to your tutor, so that he or she has a chance to put things right. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 10 working days.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to the Course Director and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the Course Director to acknowledge your request within 2 working days of receipt and a response within 15 working days.

ACE TEFL's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from the Course Director, then you have the option of writing the Centre Director, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from ACE TEFL's Centre Director.

The Centre Director will respond normally within 10 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

This policy statement was approved by Alexander Makarios and George Vassilakis, Directors of ACE TEFL, in January 2021 and is due for review in January 2022.

