



## **Pennine Lancashire SCITT – Trainee Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Pennine Lancashire SCITT is committed to running a programme that has the maximum positive impact for all staff and trainees. We understand that there may be times where things do not work as they should and the SCITT believes that it is in everyone's best interest to resolve concerns and complaints at the earliest possible stage. Before a formal commencement of a complaint, it is expected that the trainee discusses a grievance with the appropriate mentor, SCITT Lead Mentor, or SCITT director.

The majority of issues raised by partnership trainee teachers/staff are concerns rather than complaints. The Pennine Lancashire SCITT is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing to implement formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, individuals may wish or be asked to follow the SCITT's formal complaints procedure. Pennine Lancashire SCITT reserves the right to reject a formal complaint that it considers to be unsubstantiated or frivolous.

For the Pennine Lancashire SCITT to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within three months minus one day of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than three months minus one day it will not be investigated. The prime aim of the policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

### **Scope**

The scope of this policy covers most complaints that the Partnership is likely to receive.

This includes, for example –

- Complaints about ITT personnel
- Complaints about placement schools
- Issues with the ITT programme
- Health and safety issues
- The working environment
- Harassment and discrimination

### **Interpersonal relationships or bullying**

It is usual to disregard anonymous complaints unless somebody is prepared to substantiate them. However anonymous complaints may be investigated, at the discretion of the SCITT Director, if it is felt the complaint is of sufficient seriousness to warrant this.



## **General Principles**

The Pennine Lancashire SCITT Complaints Procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to understand and use;
- be impartial;
- be non-adversarial;
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensure a full and fair investigation
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- provide information to the PLSCITT Operations group so that services can be improved.

## **Procedure**

The Pennine Lancashire SCITT Complaints Procedure has four main stages, as follows:

Stage 1: A complaint is raised informally with a mentor or supporting teacher;

Stage 2: A concern is heard by the Lead Mentor) in the base school;

Stage 3: The concern is escalated to the Primary Director/ SCITT director and a formal complaint is heard and responded to by the SCITT Director

At each stage, the person investigating the complaint will ensure that they

- Clarify the nature of the complaint and unresolved issues
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right
- Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Keep notes of the interview(s)

At each stage, the person investigating the complaint will seek ways to resolve the complaint satisfactorily. It may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An acknowledgement that the complaint is valid in whole or in part and/or acknowledgement that the situation could have been handled differently or better (this is not the same as an admission of negligence)
- An apology
- An explanation



- An assurance and an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review SCITT procedures in light of the complaint.

Where it is not felt that a complaint is valid in whole or in part, this will be communicated with an explanation of why the complaint is not upheld.

### **Appeal**

If the trainee is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint they can appeal under the PLSCITT Appeal policy.

### **Office of Independent Adjudicators**

If a complaint cannot be resolved the trainee has the right to make a formal complaint to the OIA however, before a student can complain to the OIA, they must normally have first completed their provider's internal complaints or appeals procedures. Once they have done so, the provider should issue a Completion of Procedures Letter. This letter should set out clearly the issues that have been considered, the provider's final decision and the deadline for bringing a complaint to the OIA.

WEB SITE: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>

OIA

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