THE INSTITUTE OF Psychosynthesis
SOULMAKING AT WORK

STUDENT GRIEVANCES COMPLAINTS, APPEALS AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES

The Institute has procedures which students should follow if they have a grievance or want to make a formal complaint. They are guidelines to the maintenance of good practice.

The intent informing these procedures is to provide mediation, conciliation and resolution wherever possible and in the first instance. Everyone involved should accept and work to the Institute's Code of Ethics and Practice when considering a grievance or a complaint. The Codes are guidelines to the maintenance of good practice.

The guiding principles behind the procedures are that grievances and complaints shall be:

- Treated seriously and with fairness
- Dealt with quickly, simply and at the appropriate level, as far as possible
- Progressed through two stages – an informal stage and a formal stage
- Dealt with and resolved whenever possible, at the informal stage
- Dealt with without prejudice to the students' right to take their complaint to Middlesex University and/or UKCP once they have exhausted these processes

The following cases are not covered by these procedures:

- Complaints which are made by clients against student practitioners (APP and UKCP policy covers these)
- A student or group of students having a grievance about an Institute process or service which does not allege a breach of a specific section of the Code of Ethics, Code of Practice or Appeals Procedure. The system of Module Group Representatives is the channel for students to give feedback and make requests about the service being provided by the Institute

If students are in doubt about the best channel for their grievance, they are encouraged to speak to the Dean of Student Affairs, who will advise them.

Grievance Procedure

In the normal course of events students are encouraged to deal with any issues or misunderstandings they may have in the following way:

- Stage 1: address the issue through direct communication with the person concerned, whether fellow student, trainer, supervisor etc.
- Stage 2: if this fails to resolve the issue the student should inform and discuss the matter with the Training Director who will attempt to facilitate some resolution. If the grievance involves the Training Director, the student should go to the Ethics Officer (who is appointed as required)
- Stage 3: if still dissatisfied after the Training Directors' facilitation, the student should inform and discuss the matter with the Ethics Officer who will attempt to mediate some resolution and/or advise the student how to proceed

If after all three stages the student considers that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, the student may consider making a written complaint.

Complaints Procedure

A student may make a written complaint if the complaint alleges a breach of a specific section of the Code of Ethics and Practice.

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All parties involved in making and handling the complaint should agree to follow and exhaust the course of the Complaints Procedure before having recourse to Middlesex University and/or UKCP. This is fully in line with the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice and with the Institute's agreement with the University.

Although it is intended that the process should be concluded within six months of the receipt of the written complaint, it is recognised that in some complex cases it may be necessary to extend the period of investigation, conciliation and/or appeals proceedings beyond this timescale.

Stages of Making a Complaint

The Complaints Procedure proceeds through five stages, each of which has a separate aim and specific requirements.

1 Submission of the Complaint

In order to be considered, the complaint must normally be submitted no more than six calendar months after the event or problem to which the complaint is related.

The complainant should detail their complaint, and the reason why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of preceding informal stages of attempted resolution. The complaint should be sent in writing to the Ethics Officer, who will notify the Academic Board and request the appointment of a Complaints Committee to handle the complaint. It is the responsibility of the Academic Board to convene the Complaint Committee.

The Ethics Officer will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within one working week.

2 Investigation and Conciliation

The Committee will consist of three people, who will elect a Chairperson from amongst them. The composition of the panel will have regard for the expertise available among APP members concerning the substance of the complaint. Every person on the panel must be external to the complainant's involvement with the Institute. No-one involved in the previous informal attempts at resolution may sit on the panel.

Declaration of Interest
Members of the Complaints Committee have a duty to declare any interests which may cast doubt on their impartiality. The views of the Complainant and the subject of the complaint (if applicable) will be taken into consideration by the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee when deciding whether any persons should be replaced on the panel.

Aim
The aim of this stage of the Complaints Procedure is to inform the person complained against of the complaint against them, and the grounds and substance of the complaint, and to request a preliminary response. The committee will provide a deadline for submission of this response. The Committee will then produce a record of the areas of agreement and disagreement between the parties involved in the complaint and assess the validity of the complaint: the need to progress to Adjudication or the conclusion that there is no basis for the complaint to proceed. The committee will inform the complainant and the person complained against in writing of their conclusion, and the reasons for it.

Conduct
Those persons taking part in any stages of the Complaints Procedure are required to act in a manner that does not breach confidentiality, and not to act in such a way as might prejudice or influence the outcome of any of these stages of the Complaints Procedure. Any breach of this may result in the procedure being halted by the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee.

3 Investigation

In the case that the Committee upholds the validity of the complaint, the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee will appoint one or more independent persons (the Conciliators) who are to act impartially to

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investigate the complaint. In doing so they may make such enquiries as they deem necessary. They will arrange to meet with the complainant, and the subject of the complaint if applicable, either separately or together, as soon as practicable.

Notice of Meeting
Once a date and venue for the meeting(s) are agreed, the Conciliator(s) will send written details of arrangements for the meeting to the complainant, and the subject of the complaint if applicable.

Refusal or Failure to Attend the Meeting by the Complainant
The refusal or failure of a complainant to attend meetings with the Conciliator(s) without good reason or due notice, will mean that the complaint is deemed to have been withdrawn. The Conciliators will report to the Chairperson or the Complaints Committee who will write to both parties to this effect exonerating anyone implicated in the complaint.

Refusal or Failure to Attend the Meeting by a Subject of the Complaint
The refusal or failure of a subject of the complaint to attend meetings with the Conciliator(s) without good reason or due notice, will mean that the Conciliator(s) are required to inform the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee. The committee will consider what is the most appropriate action to take.

Outcome
Following the meeting(s), the Conciliator(s) will write detailing the nature of the investigation and the outcome thereof to the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee. Copies will be sent to the complainant and subject of the complaint if applicable. The Complaints Committee will consider the Conciliator's/s' report and will notify both parties as to whether or not the matter will be taken to adjudication or terminated.

4 Adjudication

Purpose
Adjudication takes the form of a meeting of the Complaints Committee, the purpose of which is to examine the complaint in a formal manner, decide whether to uphold it and determine remedy and/or sanctions as appropriate. Where there are several related complaints by the same or different complainants, they may be heard at the same adjudication meeting.

Administration
The Chairperson of the Complaints Committee is responsible for arranging the adjudication meeting and notifying all participants in writing.

Representation
When appearing before the adjudication panel the complainant may be accompanied by a representative to assist in the presentation of the complainant's case. Likewise where there is a subject of the complaint involved, they may be assisted in their presentation by someone who is not a member of the Institute.

Written Evidence
Written evidence or submissions must be submitted by the complainant, and the subject of the complaint if applicable, along with any relevant submissions from witnesses. Submissions must be received by the Complaints Committee not less than fifteen working days prior to the date fixed for the adjudication meeting. Such evidence will be circulated to the Complaints Committee members, and to the complainant, and subject of the complaint if applicable, not less than ten working days prior to the meeting. The Chairperson of the Complaints Committee may take advice on the written evidence and/or procedural matters from the Institute's solicitor.

New Evidence
Because of time constraints and the requirement that evidence be submitted and circulated in advance of the panel meeting, the only new evidence which may be admitted at the discretion of the panel on the day, will be a short oral or written submission.

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Attendance by Witnesses
The Chairperson may invite witnesses to attend to speak to, and answer questions about their written submissions.

The Adjudication Meeting
This will normally be conducted according to the following protocols. Both parties will be present while:

- A summary of the complainant's case is made
- Summary of the case of the person complained against is made, if applicable
- The complainant and/or representative puts questions, through the Chairperson, to the person complained against
- The person complained against puts questions, through the Chairperson, to the complainant
- The adjudication panel members seek clarification if necessary from the complainant and/or the person complained against

When the Chairperson is satisfied that the Committee has gained all the clarification required, the Chairperson summarises the case and asks all parties to withdraw.

Conduct of Meeting
This is a formal meeting and the Chairperson of the adjudication meeting is responsible for ensuring that the proceedings are conducted in a manner which shows due regard to the gravity of the situation and to considerations of confidentiality.

Requests for Recess

- At any time during the meeting the Chairperson may order a recess
- At any time during the meeting either party may ask for a recess in order to consider any issues which may have arisen during the meeting. Such requests will be dealt with at the discretion of the Chairperson

Failure to Attend
The failure to attend without good reason or due notice of either the complainant or a person implicated in the complaint will result in the actions described above in Stage 3.

Adjudication
The Complaints Committee must decide for or against the complainant.

5 Notification of Findings

The Chairperson of the Complaints Committee will notify the decision in writing to the parties within ten working days of the adjudication meeting. The Chairperson will also notify the Academic Board of the outcome of the adjudication and recommend any remedies and/or sanctions to be imposed.

Appeals Against the Decision of the Adjudication Panel
The complainant may appeal against a decision of the adjudication panel by writing to the Chairperson of the Complaints Committee within four weeks from notification of the findings. The only grounds for an appeal are:

- That the process followed breached the above Complaints Procedure
- That the decision of the panel may be considered perverse

The Chairperson of the Complaints Committee shall arrange for the Institute's External Moderator to be called in to consider the appeal. The External Moderator may call on any of those involved in the dispute to reconsider the evidence presented to at the adjudication meeting. The External Moderator may draw on two others to constitute an Appeals Panel if they deem it necessary.

The External Moderator and/or the Appeals Panel will report its conclusions and recommendations to the parties involved. The decision of the External Moderator and/or the Appeals Panel will be final.

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Appeals Procedures Through Middlesex University and/or UKCP

If the student believes that the Institute has not fulfilled its obligations in relation to a dispute, they may further refer the case to Middlesex University and/or UKCP. In this case they should seek advice from the Middlesex University Link-Tutor as to the procedure to follow with the University, or with the UKCP representative or the External Moderator.

Legal Status and Expenses

These grievances and complaints procedures and any decision made under them are not intended to give rise to legal rights, or obligations on the Institute of Psychosynthesis to pay compensation either in respect of a decision made in the course of these procedures, or for a breach of them.

The Institute is not responsible for travel or any other expenses incurred by the complainant in connection with any stage of a grievance or complaint.

Assessment Appeals Procedure

The assessment appeals procedure is intended to cover instances when a student wishes to challenge an assessment decision.

Students should notify their Course Tutor if they want to challenge any assessment decision. The student will be asked to put in writing the reasons why they are challenging the assessment decision, and this will be passed on to the assessor. In the case of written work, a second marker may be asked to grade the paper, and both markers will come to an agreement as to the final grade to be allocated. This decision will be final. In the case of assessment of non-written work, the Training Director will adjudicate based on discussion with the student and the assessors, as necessary. The Training Director's decision will be final.

Academic Misconduct

Middlesex University Regulations

The Middlesex programmes are delivered in line with the Middlesex University regulations including aspects such as Appeals and Academic Misconduct.

Although it is not necessary to read the Regulations in their entirety you should know where you can find them (on the Middlesex University website (www.mdx.ac.uk/regulations) and also be aware of the following key details:

Appeals
Please see Section G of the Middlesex University for further information.

Academic Misconduct
Please see Section F of the Middlesex University for further info

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