



COMPLAINTS PANEL PROCEDURE

1. The Board of Trustees' Complaints Procedure provides for an appeal to a panel of two Trustees of the 16-19 Academy and one individual independent from the management and running of the College in cases where the complainant is still dissatisfied after completion of stages one and two of the procedure. The independent individual should not be a member, trustee or employee of the College. The Complaints Panel will be convened at the discretion of the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
2. The appeal should be lodged in writing with the Clerk to the Board of Trustees within 15 days of the outcome of the stage two investigation being notified to the complainant. The Complaints Panel should be convened without undue delay, but with reasonable notice to the complainant, which should be not less than 7 working days. The date should be agreed with the complainant. Failure to attend on the agreed date will mean that the complainant has forfeited her/his entitlement to pursue the appeal.
3. At the meeting of the panel the complainant may be accompanied by a friend/supporter. The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before the recording of meetings or conversations takes place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.
4. The Chair of the Panel will introduce the individuals making up the Panel, ask all parties to introduce themselves and explain that its decisions are final as far as the Board of Trustees is concerned. The Chair will remind all present that the proceedings should remain confidential until a final decision has been communicated to the complainant.
5. The College's representative, the Principal or Deputy Principal of the College, will refer to the stage two investigation and explain why the complaint was not upheld, and may call witnesses at this stage.
6. The complainant or her/his friend/supporter will have the opportunity to ask questions of the College representative on the evidence given by her/him and any witnesses whom she/he may call.
7. Individuals making up the Panel may ask questions of the College's representative and witnesses.
8. The complainant (or her/his friend/supporter) will present her/his case in the presence of the College's representative and call such witnesses as she/he wishes.
9. The College's representative will have the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant and her/his witnesses.
10. Individuals making up the Panel may ask questions of the complainant and witnesses.
11. The College's representative and then the complainant (or her/his friend/supporter) will have an opportunity to sum up their cases if they so wish.
12. The Chair will then ask the College's representative and the complainant (and her/his friend/supporter) to withdraw.
13. The Panel will consider the appeal in private, only recalling the College's representative and the complainant and, if applicable, friend/advisor to clear points of uncertainty on evidence already given. If a recall is necessary both parties are to return.

14. The Panel will communicate its decision to both parties in writing as soon as possible, but, in any event, within 3 working days.

Approved by the Strategy and Policy Committee of the Board of Trustees June 2023