

# COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS & COMPLIMENTS POLICY

**Responsible for Implementation: Head of Quality and Compliance**

**Latest Review Date: September 2023**

**Next Review Date: September 2024**

**Authorised By: Chief Operating Officer**

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1. [Complaints Comments and Compliments Policy \(Website\)](#)
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## About Us

Access Further Education Ltd ('The College') has subsidiary companies, trading names and trading partnerships through which it operates. The trading names and partnerships might have their own names or brands, but the legal entity for the purpose of this policy is Access Further Education Ltd. Trading subsidiaries, trading names and trading partnerships include Access Creative College ('ACC'), Access Industry ('AI') and Access Sport ('AS'). The dBs Institute (DBS Music UK Holdings and its subsidiaries), whilst a separate legal entity, shares common Directorships with the College.

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## Complaints, Comments & Compliments Policy & Procedure

### CCC Policy Statement

Access Creative College is committed to providing the best possible service for all of its learners. We do however acknowledge that learners can at times feel dissatisfied and are entitled to have their concerns listened to and addressed. In such cases, the college wishes to respond quickly and effectively.

Normally, learners are invited to raise their concerns in the first instance with the appropriate tutors and then with the centre manager as a complaint can often be resolved quickly and simply in this way. However, if learners are not satisfied with the response made by their centre, or do not wish to use this route, they may make a formal complaint instead.

If you are a learner studying on a Higher Education programme validated by Nottingham and Trent University, following initial complaints raised in line with the Access Creative College procedures, which remain unresolved, then appropriate escalation routes are via NTU in accordance with their arrangements, the details of which can be found [here](#).

The procedure for making a complaint is set out below and is also presented in a user-friendly guide, entitled: [‘How to make a formal complaint, comment or compliment’](#). This can be emailed or posted to learners/parents on request.

# Application

These procedures are primarily for the use of all learners (or their parents or guardians) of the college group. In addition, they may be also used by any visitors or partners who make permitted use of college services, facilities and premises. In most circumstances, any staff wishing to initiate a complaint should use other, appropriate People Services procedures.

## Procedure for Formal Complaints

Step	Process	Who
1.	If a learner, their parent or guardian, visitor, employer or partner wishes to make a formal complaint, comment or compliment, they can send an email to <a href="mailto:ccc.admin@accesstomusic.ac.uk">ccc.admin@accesstomusic.ac.uk</a> . Learners, their parents or guardians, visitors, employers or partners may also call ACC on Tel. 0161 247 8088	Learner/ parent or guardian/ visitor/partner
2.	All formal complaints are logged, and then sent to the CCC Administrator for further action. This will include sending a standard acknowledgement/holding email to the complainant. Complaints addressed to the Head of Quality and Compliance are similarly logged and passed to the CCC Administrator.	CCC Administrator
3.	The CCC Administrator will send an acknowledgement email to the complainant within five working days excluding weekends and bank holidays.	CCC Administrator
4.	A copy of the complaint transcript, and any previous information pertaining to the complaint will be sent by the CCC Administrator to be investigated and resolved by the Head of Quality and Compliance or another relevant investigating officer	CCC Administrator
5.	Upon receipt of the complaint, the Head of Quality and Compliance will respond to acknowledge that they will be investigating the complaint. They may request to interview the relevant parties as appropriate and examine any pertinent and or appropriate evidence.	CCC Administrator

6.	The complaint investigation might require access to sensitive personal data (under the Data Protection Act and GDPR compliance) in order to arrive at a definitive conclusion. The investigator will handle such information with due regard to its sensitivity, only sharing it with any others who need to know or be aware, as a part of the investigation. The complainant submitting a formal complaint must be aware that the above information will be made available under these conditions, as part of an investigation.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ Investigator
7.	The investigator will endeavour to complete the investigation within 15 working days issuing an email that highlights the findings which summarises the conclusions or outcomes. This email should also state if the investigation is both complete and now regarded as closed. NB Some investigations may take longer than 15 days to complete e.g. due to relevant parties being absent or on holiday. In such cases the investigator will send an interim letter or email summarising progress and provide a planned date of completion.	Head of Quality and Compliance / Investigator
8.	At the conclusion of the complaint, the investigator will return their report to the CCC Administrator, together with all other documentation relevant to the investigation. The CCC Administrator will retain all documentation relating to the complaint, such that it can be easily retrieved if required for an Appeal.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator

## Appeals

9.	The complainant may appeal against a decision if they regard the complaint as still unresolved. The complainant should appeal via email to the CCC Administrator <i>within 15 working days</i> from the date that the final response was sent by the college. The appeal must indicate what the complainant's reasons are for appealing against the investigator's conclusions and provide any additional evidence to support the appeal.	Complainant CCC Administrator
10.	The Head of Quality and Compliance will review the documentation, with an appeals panel composed of members from the senior leadership team at ACC. This review will consider whether or not the investigation has been fair, sufficiently thorough, and proportionate in its judgements. It will <i>not</i> involve a re-hearing of the complaint, nor a meeting with the complainant unless the investigation is found to have been lacking and further work is required.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator/SLT
11.	The decision of the Head of Quality and Compliance / investigator/appeals panel will be sent to the complainant within 15 working days, and copied to the CCC Administrator. This decision will be final.	Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator

## Information Requests and Data Subject Access Requests

12.	Our DSAR / Information Request policy and form is available by emailing <a href="mailto:dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk">dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk</a> . Any requests for information / formal DSAR received by a member of staff must be forwarded without delay to <a href="mailto:dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk">dataprotection@acesstomusic.ac.uk</a> .	Learner/parent CCC Administrator Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
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## Complaint Reporting (Office Use Only)

13.	A complaint report will be prepared annually to review complaint trends by cause, site, ethnicity and disability. The complaint report will also be submitted to the Head of Quality and Compliance at the end of each academic year for consideration.	CCC Administrator Head of Quality and Compliance/ investigator
14.	Improvement measures recommended by the investigator will be shared by the investigator with the relevant managers, for action and/or to feed their self-assessment process.	CCC Manager

## Compliments

15.	Any compliments received verbally may be logged and, together with those received by letter, email or phone call, should be forwarded to the CCC Administrator. Details of compliments will be shared with relevant members of staff.	CCC Administrator
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