

BRADFORD BIRTH TO 19 SCITT

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Date Approved: September 2023

Approved By:

Review date: September 2025

Publication: This Policy and Procedure will be published on the SCITT Website. Trainees will be informed of their right to utilise this policy and process at their discretion.

Policy Statement

Bradford Birth to 19 SCITT vision is to develop highly employable, research informed, early career ready teachers who will transform the life chances of you people in their local area. The nature of any SCITT course is a focus on school-based experience and skills development. For most weeks Trainees are on school based placement for at least 3 days and sometimes 5 days per week. The venues for the taught sessions are also currently within local schools.

Scope

- a. This policy can be used by anyone who is a current Trainee with BBto19 SCITT, or a Trainee who completed their training with BBto19 SCITT within 12 calendar months of the date of initiating the complaint
- b. This policy does not cover complaints or queries referred to below;
 - Complaints related to judgments on Sheffield Hallam University's Assignments / PGCE accreditation
 - Complaints related to Review judgements or decisions to terminate school placements are covered by BBto19 SCITT Appeals Policy
 - Complaints related to inappropriate behaviour by members of BBto19 SCITT staff, staff in partner schools or other Trainees may be better dealt with using BBto19 SCITT's Anti-Bullying Policy

The purpose of this complaints policy is to provide clear procedures for dealing with complaints made by Trainees against Bradford Birth to 19 SCITT (BBto19 SCITT). BBto19 takes trainee concerns seriously in the first instance to reduce formal complaints and initiating formal procedure. However, in those instances where a trainee does not feel that a concern has been addressed, or it is of sufficient gravity, then BBto19 SCITT's formal complaints procedure should be used.

The prime aim of BBto19 Complaint 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.

The BBto19 SCITT Complaint Policy has four main stages outlined as follows:

1. Informal resolution- A concern is raised informally with a trainee's tutor or SCITT course leader. If the matter is not resolved verbally a trainee can proceed to the next stage.
2. Formal stage- A formal written complaint. If the matter is not resolved a trainee can proceed to the next stage.
3. Review Stage- A further internal investigation. If the matter is not resolved a trainee can proceed to the next stage.
4. Independent external review (OIA). If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they may refer it to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Trainees should initially email their tutor outlining their concerns. They will attempt to resolve the complaint quickly and informally and at a local level through, for example:

- a face-to-face meeting with the Trainee
- asking an appropriate colleague to resolve the complaint
- providing background information or an explanation relevant to the issue
- suggesting solutions
- giving an apology where appropriate.

Stage 2: Formal Stage

A Trainee should use the Complaint Recording Form included as Appendix A. This allows trainees set out their complaint in a clear and succinct way, referring to evidence relevant to the complaint.

- The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The Head of ITT will acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The complaint will be delegated to the Leadership Team member with direct responsibility for the particular area. An investigation will be conducted, which will be proportionate to the complexity and seriousness of the complaint, interviewing the Trainee and other relevant parties where appropriate and conclusion reached. Leadership Team member will write to the complainant within 21 academy days of the complaint being received.

Stage 3: Review Stage (final internal BBto19 stage)

A Review Panel drawn from three members of BBto19 SCITT Strategic Board will consider the way in which the complaint was investigated in Stage 2. The Trainee will be invited in writing to attend a hearing and given 10 days' notice of the hearing date.

- Trainees will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend, family member, or representative from a Teaching Union or Students' Union.
- The Trainee will be provided with information about the composition of the panel, a copy of the evidence to be considered and information about the support that is available to them including contact details.
- A record of the meeting will be taken recording the date, people in attendance, a brief summary of the meeting.

The Panel will consider the following questions:

- Were the relevant procedures followed during the formal stage?
- Was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstance?
- Has the trainee received clear reasons why the complaint was rejected at the earlier stage?
- If new material evidence has been provided, has the Trainee given valid reasons for not supplying this earlier?

The Review Panel, having considered the material submitted to them may:

1. overturn the outcome of the formal stage and recommend a remedy
2. refer the complaint back to the formal stage for reconsideration
3. uphold the outcome of the formal stage.

The Chair of the Review Panel will write to the Trainee with their decision and an outline of the reasons for their decision within three working days of the hearing. Where appropriate, this letter will also advise the Trainee on their right to submit a complaint to the OIA, the time limit for doing so and where and how to access advice and support with this process.

Stage 4: Independent External Review (OIA)

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. BBto19 is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome you may be able to ask the OIA to review your complaint. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.

You normally need to have completed the complaints procedure before you complain to the OIA. We will send you a letter called a "Completion of Procedures Letter" when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your complaint is not upheld, BBto19 will issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter automatically. If your complaint is upheld or partly upheld you can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures Letters and when you should expect to receive one here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>.

Students must make their complaint to the OIA within 12 months of completing this procedure. The 12 month period will normally run from the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

- BBto19 SCITT will retain data related to the complaint for 15 months from the start of the complaint and after this time all data will be deleted. All data will be stored securely during this time.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially. BBto19 SCITT will only disclose information to those who need it to investigate the complaint or to respond to the issues raised. In some circumstances data may be used to consider whether a Trainee is fit to practice.
- If a Trainee makes a complaint they should only include any necessary information about third parties. Evidence provided must focus on the impact that a third party has had on the Trainee themselves. For example, if the mitigation is based on the health of a family member, BBto19 do not need to see the detailed medical information about that person.

To be used if stage 1 informal resolution has failed to provide you with a satisfactory outcome.

Your Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Contact telephone number _____

Please give specific details of your complaint

Please list any evidence which supports your complaint

Signature _____

Date _____

Official use:

Date of acknowledgement _____

By whom _____

Complaint referred to _____

Date _____