

International School of Creative Arts

Complaints Procedure

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ISCA Complaints Procedure

Introduction

International School of Creative Arts welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and students, and takes seriously complaints and concerns that they may raise.

The way we work is reviewed regularly from time to time, however, a parent or student may feel they have a complaint against some aspects of our School, or an individual member of staff. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially (although disclosure may perhaps be required in the course of the School's inspection or where legal obligation prevails).

Reference to "Student" / "Parent" / "You" includes current students and parents of current students and may at our discretion include students and parents of students who have recently left the School.

We aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner. Timescales for each stage are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. When we refer to working days, we mean Monday to Friday, when School is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the School's website.

If you wish to make a complaint you should follow our Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

You should normally contact your / your son/daughter's Tutor in the first instance but you can also talk directly to other members of staff, write a letter, email or telephone. An informal complaint provided in writing will be acknowledged within two working days. The teacher will make a written record of the complaint.

Should the outcome not be resolved satisfactorily within 5 working days, you may wish to proceed with a formal complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution

Please write to the Head of School detailing the nature of the complaint. Please include full details and names and dates where appropriate.

The Head of School will contact you within 5 working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we intend to proceed and the likely timescales. The Principal will ask a senior member of staff to act as investigator and the matter will be fully investigated, usually within 10 working days. If there is any delay, we will keep you up to date and advise you of the reasons.

The investigator will speak to all the people involved in the cause of the complaint in order to establish the facts. Initially, those involved will be interviewed separately. If there are discrepancies in the evidence given, the investigator may decide to call several people together in order to investigate further. If the complaint involves a member of staff, the Head of School may decide to invite the parent to talk to the member of staff in the presence of the Head of School in order to establish a course of action to resolve the problem.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. The investigator will prepare a report on the investigation which will be considered by the Head of School.

The Head of School will then send a letter or report to you as soon as possible advising the conclusion of the investigation and any action proposed or taken. Complainants will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of the complaint being received.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can request that the complaint be referred to the Complaints Panel under Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3: Panel Hearing

A Complaints Panel Hearing is a review of the decisions taken at Stage 2 by the Head of School. The Panel will not consider any new areas of complaint which have not been previously raised as part of the complaints procedure. The role of the Panel is to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made by considering:

- (a) the documents provided by both parties and
- (b) any representations made by the complainant and the Head of School

and to reach a decision, on the balance of probabilities, as to whether each complaint is made out in whole or in part.

It is not within the powers of the Complaints Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, students or parents. The Complaints Panel may make recommendations to the School on these matters or any other issues as appropriate.

A request for a Complaints Panel must be put in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Directors within five working days of the decision complained of. The Board will convene a panel of at least three people, not directly involved in the matters that are subject to complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the School.

The Panel will call for a full report from the Head of School and, if necessary, obtain further particulars about the matter from all parties. The Panel will examine the complaint fully before responding. This may result in a positive solution but, if it does not, the Panel will invite you to a meeting which should take place normally within 10 working days of the receipt of the request. The complainant may be accompanied to the Hearing by one other person. This may be a relative or friend. The Hearing is not legal proceedings and so legal representation is not necessary. If you do wish to be accompanied by someone who is legally qualified, you must notify the Panel of this at least 5 working days prior to the Hearing and should note that the Panel will wish to speak to you directly and this person will not be permitted to act as an advocate.

The Hearing will be conducted in an informal manner and a clerk will be appointed to take a handwritten minute of the proceedings. All those present at the Hearing shall have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments in an appropriate manner and are expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners or, after due warning, the Hearing may be adjourned or terminated at the discretion of the Chair. If terminated, the original decision will stand. Any person who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the way the Hearing is conducted must say so before the proceedings go any further and his / her comments will be minuted.

After due consideration of all the relevant facts, the Panel will reach a decision on the balance of probabilities and make recommendations which shall be completed within 10 days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the complainant informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Head of School and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the complaint.

The completion of Stage 3 represents the conclusion of the School's complaints procedure.

Record Keeping

A written record will be kept of all complaints, including the stage at which they were resolved. In accordance with data protection principles, details of individual complaints will be kept only for as long as is considered to be reasonably necessary in the circumstances.

Complaints to ISI

Parents and students have the right to make a complaint to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) if they wish to do so,

The address for the Independent Schools Inspectorate is CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, telephone 020 7600 0100.