

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

## Introduction

At Impress we are committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. To do so, we need you to tell us if we get things wrong because we want to help resolve your complaint as quickly as possible. We will always listen to your concerns, provide a response and learn from them.

## What This Policy Covers

This policy covers complaints about the standard of service you should expect from us and the behaviour of our staff in delivering that service.

## Our Responsibilities

Our Senior Leaders are responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented, but may delegate tasks within it as necessary.

All of our staff are responsible for identifying complaints and forwarding them and any other information needed to the Senior Leaders. We will record your complaints confidentially.

## Stage 1: Informal Complaint

If a complaint is straightforward and we accept we have done something wrong, we hope to be able to resolve a complaint by saying we are sorry, learning from our mistake and endeavouring to put things right. The informal route is our preferred resolution, and when this is an option, we will do this promptly and within ten working days.

Any member of Impress staff can deal with a complaint informally (including the person being complained about) and can offer an on-the-spot apology. They can pass it on to the Senior Leaders if they are unable to resolve the issue.

## Examples of a Stage 1 Complaint:

- We are late in replying to you, or you have not received a response
- You are unhappy about something one of our staff said, and they agree it could have been handled or said in a better way.

If we apologise on the phone or face-to-face, we will not usually follow up with an email (although individual members of staff may decide to).

If you are still not happy or we do not feel that the complaint is easily dealt with informally,

you can make a formal complaint using the Stage 2 Formal Complaint.



## Stage 2: Formal Complaint

**A complaint will be escalated to this stage when:**

- Stage 1 was attempted but you remain dissatisfied
- The issues are complex or require detailed investigation, or
- The complaint relates to issues that have been identified as serious.

**Making a Stage 2 Formal Complaint**

- You can make a formal complaint:

**By email:** TCaldwell@impress.education

**By post:** Impress The Examiner Limited  
42 Woodstock Avenue  
Romford  
Essex RM3 9NF

**When making your complaint please include:**

- Your name and address (an email address will do)
- What your complaint is about, and
- Any other requirement that would help you

Please try to be as clear and detailed as possible to help us understand your complaint and respond to you promptly.

## Timescales

If you want to make a formal complaint, then you should do so within three months of the matter you wish to complain about. Any longer makes it difficult to look at your complaint and recall certain situations.

We aim to send a full response within twenty working days of receiving your complaint. If we are not able to meet this deadline, we will tell you and let you know when we are likely to be able to respond to your complaint.

## Initial Assessment

We will decide whether the issue is a complaint or whether it needs to be dealt with in another way. If your complaint is covered by another policy or process, we will send it to the correct team to handle and let you know. For example, the staff disciplinary policy may need to be referred to, or we may need to utilise our GDPR policies instead.

## Reasons We May Refuse Your Complaint

There are also situations where we may decide that we will not look into your complaint further, these include:

- Attempts to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given you our final decision
- Where we have already looked into the matter for you under another process
- Anonymous complaints
- Where the time-limit for complaining has passed

If we are refusing to investigate further, we will explain this to you.

## Acknowledging the Complaint

If we think the complaint should be investigated under stage 2 of this policy, we will acknowledge the complaint within five working days of receiving it.

## Investigation

At Stage 2 we will need to investigate and the Senior Leaders will decide which member of staff will look into your complaint. This will be investigated fairly and you can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect. Where possible, they will be someone who has not been involved before.

If the complaint is about a staff member, this will usually be investigated by their line manager and they should attempt to resolve these concerns. Where we are at fault, this could involve apologising or explaining how improvements will be made and the situation rectified.

Where necessary, we will engage the services of an External Arbiter and their information is as follows:

**Name:** Peter Everett

**Email:** [pete.everett@growbe.co.uk](mailto:pete.everett@growbe.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8064 1026

## Outcome

We will give a fair and balanced description of what happened and what conclusions we have reached on your complaint.

If we are able to put things right, we will try to do so. If we are unable to put things right, we will be open and honest, say sorry, explain what went wrong (and why) and try to improve in the future.

This is the final stage of the complaint process.



## Whistleblowing Policy

### A. Policy Statement

1. This policy aims to enable and encourage staff to raise concerns within Impress the Examiner Limited. It recognises a worker's legal rights to make a protected disclosure to certain prescribed persons or bodies under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and any subsequent legislation, as incorporated into the Employment Rights Act 1996.
2. Impress the Examiner Limited is committed to creating a safe, open and transparent workplace culture, where employees are encouraged to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity. Impress the Examiner Limited recognises that employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within an organisation.
3. It is important to Impress the Examiner that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by workers or officers of the organisation is reported and properly dealt with. Impress the Examiner is committed to tackle malpractice and wrongdoing. Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. If any cases of wrongdoing are upheld they will be seriously dealt with.
4. Impress the Examiner encourages staff to use internal mechanisms for reporting malpractice or illegal acts or omissions by employees or ex-employees. Employees will be listened to and serious concerns will be investigated.
5. Impress the Examiner will provide regular refresher training to all managers enabling them to deal with concerns that are raised and is committed to treating all disclosures consistently and fairly.
6. Impress the Examiner will ensure that all new employees, contractors and managers will receive induction on the policy and will provide refresher training to all members of staff so that they are aware of whistleblowing law and know how to use this policy.
7. Adequate resources will be made available to fulfil the aims of this policy. The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available through the staff intranet. 8.

This policy allows staff to take the matter further if they are dissatisfied with the management response and aims to reassure staff that they will be protected from harassment or victimisation from co-workers or from Impress the Examiner Limited for raising concerns.