

Student Complaint Procedure

Concerned Office/ Department

Office of Admissions

Effective from

05-SEP-2016

GUIDELINES FOR RESOLUTION OF STUDENT COMPLAINT

The Metropolitan School of Music (MSM) is committed to providing high quality music education and related services to all its students. MSM aims to provide a supportive environment for students and to be responsive to student concerns when they are raised. MSM views the Student Complaint Procedure as an opportunity to monitor its services and in the provision of feedback. There may be times when students feel that they have not received the high quality of education or level of service that they are reasonably entitled to expect. These problems need addressing to ensure that normal high standards are maintained. MSM undertakes to investigate all issues that are raised and deal with them through a process that is fair, consistent, timely and easy to follow.

Whose complaint will be considered by MSM?

Any current student enrolled directly by the Conservatory or through the host of an Outreach programme, notwithstanding if such student is on an authorised leave of absence or withdrawn from a programme within three months of the problem occurring, can register a complaint with the Office of Admissions, directly or through parents/ legal guardian or by authorised individuals of an entity hosting Outreach programme and wherein the student is also registered as a student (or member) with such entity. *No complaint may be made about the refusal to admit a student onto a programme.* A group of students can put in a group complaint but each student will be asked to fill out an individual form and submit on this their own details and desired outcome and signature but they may send in the same statement describing the complaint.

What can one complaint about?

MSM will look at complaints about any aspect of its services as long as such complaints are not vexatious or trivial. The complaints process will not look at matters of academic judgment or the conduct of an academic appeal.

When to complaint?

An informal complaint can be registered within twenty working days of the initial cause for complaint. If unhappy with the resolution offered at this stage, the Formal Complaints procedure may be initiated within three (3) calendar months of the original event. If the informal complaint has been protracted, MSM we may look at issues outside this time frame.

Confidentiality

This will be a confidential process but if the student is complaining about a member of staff, the student will be advised that this member of staff may be told of the issue. It may be impossible to reach resolution, unless the subject is broached with the individual staff member. If one has concerns about what is communicated to the member of staff one may discuss this with the Programme Coordinator as authorised and designated by MSM.

Anonymous complaints

It is usually impractical to investigate a complaint which has been made anonymously but student may seek the advice of the Programme Coordinator without giving her (or his) name.

How to complain?

Dealing with small problems or areas of concern as they arise will often lead to an early resolution. For this reason, all students must first engage with the informal complaint process and only when this fails to reach agreement, embark on the second stage, that of making a formal complaint. In the first instance, a student should attempt to resolve the complaint informally.

Settling a complaint informally

Informal complaints can be raised with any member of staff in authority; for example, a personal tutor, authorised person of host institution, or Programme Coordinator. Advice can also be sought about the complaints process from the Office of Admissions.

When a complaint is not resolved at the informal stage

If one would like to pursue a complaint formally, one will need to fill out a Formal Complaint Form, summarising the complaint in no more than 300 words and submit it with your documentary evidence to the Office of Admissions where it will be receipted. Student should include evidence of how she (or he) tried to resolve the complaint informally. Include the dates, the person met, what was discussed, the agreed actions and the outcome.

Drafting the Complaint

Student needs to give full details of complaint, the dates when things happened, the people spoken to and support these with documentary evidence like letters, emails and notes. Students are also expected to say what they would like to happen to resolve their complaint.

What will happen next?

Students will receive acknowledgment and they will be informed that the investigation into the complaint is about to start. An Investigation Officer will be appointed to carry out the investigation and will contact the student if they need more information. The Investigation Officer will write to the complainant and let them know where within MSM the complaint has been sent for an answer. One can expect a reply within three (3) working weeks. If this is not possible student will receive a letter explaining why not.

What will the reply say?

The reply will explain the results of the investigation. If the complaint is well founded or partially founded, the student will be offered an apology or other redress if appropriate, and MSM will explain what measures it will be putting in place to ensure the situation is not repeated. If the complaint is deemed to be unfounded then a full explanation will be given. Student will get the result in writing by letter from the Investigation Officer.

What if student don't like the result?

Student (along with complainant, if different from student) will be invited to respond to the outcome of the investigation. If unhappy with the outcome, student can request a review of the decision in writing. **Student should be aware that such request for review must fall within the permitted grounds to seek a review, and student must give sound reasons as to why the investigation has been unfair or inadequate. Simply not liking the result of the investigation will not necessarily be sufficient reason for the review to go ahead.**

What happens next?

A Review of Decision shall be conducted by the Governing Board of MSM at their next convening date. The Governing Board may convene in the office of The Metropolitan Education and Testing Services, the managers and operators of MSM, in the Republic of India or in the office of Arte Infrastructure UK Limited, the licensors of MSM, in United Kingdom. The Governing Board of MSM convenes quarterly.

Conclusion by Governing Council

MSM will issue a letter summarising the outcome of the completion of Review of Decision by the Governing Council. If the Governing Council find the decision awarded as incorrect, the student will be offered an apology or other redress if appropriate, and MSM will explain what measures it will be putting in place to ensure the situation is not repeated. However, if the Governing Council finds the decision correct, the complaint matter shall be closed with no further rights to appeal available to the student within the constitution of MSM.

Involvement of the police or solicitors

If at any point, the subject of the complaint becomes part of a police investigation, the complaints process will be suspended until such time as the police have completed their process. If a student employs solicitors to act on her (or his) behalf with regard to an ongoing complaint, MSM will cease to deal with the complaint under its procedures and the solicitors shall be referred to the legal advisors of Arte Infrastructure UK Limited for petitioning in a court in England under English law.