

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

ACE 11+ TUITION



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1. INTRODUCTION

ACE 11+ Tuition is committed to developing a strong sense of partnership with parents/carers and other members of the local community. This provides a good basis for understanding and resolution when things appear to go wrong. This policy describes the procedure to be followed when complaints are made by parents/carers.

In the Complaints Procedure, the following terms have the meanings stated below:

“**Child**” means the child who is registered to attend a session;

“**Complainant**” means the parent or guardian of a child registered to attend ACE 11+ Tuition;

“**ACE 11+ TUTION**” means ACE Tutorial LLP - a limited liability partnership company with partnership no OC415815 registered in England and Wales.

2. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

“A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of actions, by ACE 11+ Tuition that requires a response.

3. WHY WE HAVE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND PRINCIPLES?

We ensure that any complaints are resolved quickly and smoothly. We try to resolve any misunderstanding. The complaints procedure ensures that complainants can feel assured from the outset of a fairness, in line with the complaints procedure.

Our complaints procedure is:

- a) Simple to understand
- b) Clearly defined escalation levels
- c) Enables prompt handling within established timelines
- d) Facilitates effective action
- e) Is confidential
- f) Is impartial and ensures full and fair investigation

4. COMPLAINTS PROCESS

4.1 RESPONSE TIMES

- a) We normally acknowledge complaints within five working days.
- b) We will also normally provide a response or if a lengthy investigation is involved an update on progress within twenty working days. Inevitably, some issues may be more complex and may therefore require longer duration. The above timeframe is indicative only.
- c) In the case of a lengthy investigation complainants will be kept informed of progress. The main aim throughout the procedure is to resolve the matter as quickly and effectively as possible, to everybody's satisfaction.



4.2 STAGE ONE: INFORMAL COMPLAINT

Experience tells us that, very often, potential complaints can be resolved informally. They may have arisen through a misunderstanding or can be remedied without initiating the full complaints procedure. We encourage you to take up a complaint with the person who dealt with you (at ACE 11+ Tuition) in the first instance, if possible by telephone or email. If the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction in this way, it is open to you to make a formal complaint (stage two).

- a) Parents/carers and others should raise complaints or concerns with the person who dealt with you at ACE 11+ Tuition.
- b) Parents must telephone and/or write an email (to contact@ace11plustuition.co.uk) highlighting their issues or concerns during the tuition or while serving the notice period.
- c) ACE 11+ Tuition has the discretion to ignore the complaint if it is received after the tuition services have been stopped and the account closed.
- d) Every effort will always be made to resolve the problem at this informal stage, including, possibly, the offer of a conciliation meeting.
- e) Complainants who remain dissatisfied at this stage will be informed that they can make a formal complaint. In such cases, complainants will be required to state clearly in writing that they are making a formal complaint.

4.3 STAGE TWO: FORMAL COMPLAINTS

- a) If you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you may wish to make a formal complaint. The complainant has to make the complaint within 7-10 working days from the date the issue arose.
- b) Formal complaints should be made in writing (see appendix A), should state clearly that a formal complaint is being made.
- c) The complainant will receive a written response to his/her complaint.
- d) Complainants should normally receive a response to their formal written complaint within twenty business working days of the receipt of that written complaint.
- e) When receiving the results of an investigation into a formal complaint carried out by ACE 11+ Tuition, complainants will be informed of their right to appeal and reminded that the time limit for requesting a written response is twenty business working days from the date of receiving written response from the investigation.

4.4 STAGE THREE: INDEPENDENT MEDIATOR

If complainants remain dissatisfied after the stage two, complainants may appeal to an independent mediator. The complaints procedure is stopped while mediation takes place. The role of the mediator is to make non-binding suggestions about how issues could be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties and assist the parties to identify a mutually satisfactory outcome of the complaint. The mediation process is confidential, done by a trained mediator and can lead to a written agreement that is binding on both parties.

The meeting with the mediator should normally take place within twenty business working days of receipt of the written appeal request.

We have appointed the following mediator for any complaints:

<http://www.cmds.org.uk>
Email: info@cmds.org.uk



Each party pay for their own mediation charges. Complainants can email to ask what their charges are for the first meeting and the mediation sessions.

Under this complaints procedure there is no provision for further appeal beyond Stage Three.

If, at any point, the complainant, having exhausted the complaints procedure, attempts to re-open the same complaint, she/he will be informed in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

If, at any point, a complainant requests to proceed to the next stage of the complaints procedure at a time past the twenty day time limit, she/he will normally be told in writing that the complaint has expired.

4.5 UNACCEPTABLE ACTIONS

Unacceptable Actions Policy

Unacceptable actions or behaviour by complainants. This policy sets out ACE 11+ Tuition's approach to the relatively few enquirers and complainants whose actions or behaviour is considered unacceptable. However, we reserve the right to restrict or change access to our service where an individual's actions or behaviour are considered to be unacceptable.

Defining unacceptable actions

Actions that we consider to be unacceptable are grouped under the following three broad headings:

- **Aggressive or abusive behaviour**

This can include rudeness, threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, derogatory remarks and unsubstantiated allegations. It also includes any other behaviour or language (oral or written) that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused.

- **Unreasonable demands**

This can include any action or behaviour which places unreasonable demands upon the resources of ACE 11+ Tuition, such as taking up an excessive amount of staff time to the disadvantage of other individuals or functions. For example, demanding responses within unreasonable timescales, continual phone calls or letters, repeatedly changing the substance of an enquiry/complaint or raising unrelated concerns.

- **Unreasonable persistence**

This can include persistent refusal to accept a decision made in relation to a complaint or enquiry, persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what ACE 11+ Tuition can or cannot do and continuing to pursue an issue without presenting any new information. The actions of persistent enquirers/complainants are considered to be unacceptable when they take up what ACE 11+ Tuition regards as a disproportionate amount of time and resource and adversely affects ACE 11+ Tuition's ability to provide a service to others.



Managing unacceptable actions

When we consider that an individual's behaviour is unacceptable we will tell them why we find their behaviour unreasonable and we will ask them to change it. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, we will take action to restrict the individual's contact with ACE 11+ Tution. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options most likely to be considered are:

- requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters or email only);
- requiring contact to take place with a named officer;
- restricting telephone calls to specified days and times;
- asking the individual to enter into an agreement about their conduct; and/or
- require future contact to be through a third party.

In all cases we will write to tell the individual why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable, what action we are taking and the duration of the action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it.

Cases when we may discontinue contact with enquirers/complainants

Where an individual whose enquiry or complaint is closed persists in communicating with us about it, we may decide to terminate contact with that individual. In such cases, we will read all correspondence from that individual, but unless there is fresh evidence which affects our decision in the particular case we will acknowledge it and place it on the file with no further action noted. New enquiries or complaints from individuals who come within this unreasonable actions policy because of their unreasonable persistence will be treated on their merits.

The threat or use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment towards ACE 11+ Tution staff is likely to result in the ending of all direct contact with the individual and discontinuing any investigation into their enquiry or complaint. Incidents may be reported to the police. This will always be the case if physical violence is used or threatened.

Appealing a decision to restrict contact

An individual can appeal a decision made by one of ACE 11+ Tution's staff to restrict contact. A senior member of staff who was not involved in the original decision considers the appeal. They advise the individual in writing that either the restricted contact arrangements still apply or a different course of action has been agreed. Where a decision to restrict contact has been taken or endorsed by ACE 11+ Tution, it is final.

Recording and reviewing a decision to restrict contact

ACE 11+ Tution records all incidents of unacceptable actions by individuals. Where it is decided to restrict contact, an entry noting this is made on the relevant records. A decision to restrict contact may be considered if the individual demonstrates a more acceptable approach

4.6 TERMINATING ABUSIVE PHONE CALLS

ACE 11+ Tution staff are courteous to everyone they work with and expects that they should in return be accorded due respect.

What constitutes an abusive phone call?



Rudeness, threats, personal derogatory remarks, unsubstantiated allegations and shouting can all constitute abusive phone behaviour. It also includes any other behaviour or language that causes the particular staff member to feel afraid, threatened or abused.

Inform the individual that their behaviour is considered abusive and give the individual an opportunity to modify their behaviour. Repeat abusive behaviour would result in the phone call to be terminated.

5. APPENDIX

APPENDIX A – COMPLAINTS FORM



ACE 11+ Tuition -
Complaints Form