



# POINT BLANK

## MUSIC SCHOOL

### PROCEDURE 046

### STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

#### DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX

SCOPE						
Course Type	BA(Hons)	X	CertHE	X	Professional	
School	London	X		Online	X	
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Date of Next Review	August 2024					
Publication	Staff Access					
	Student Access			X		
	Public Access via Website			X		

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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure describes how Point Blank ensures the equitable, transparent and timely consideration of a student complaints and grievances in relation to aspects of their student experience, student services, administration and service issues, financial matters, and information for their programme of study.
- 1.2 This procedure aims to explain the reasonable due course which students are required to consider and follow when submitting a complaint or grievance.

## 2. PROCEDURE DETAILS

### Stage 1: Early Resolution (Informal Complaints)

- 2.1 Point Blank encourages all students to raise any causes for concern they may have at the earliest opportunity. Most issues can normally be resolved informally, within the related department, without need for escalation to the formal stage.
- 2.2 Students wishing to make a complaint are invited to speak with the relevant team in the first instance. Where appropriate and where the student feels comfortable this should usually include the member of staff closest to the issue or the area/ department relating to the issue.
- 2.3 During discussion with the student, the member of staff will seek to remedy the issue or advise that the issue should be escalated to Formal Stage 1. It may be possible to resolve the concern by providing an on-the-spot explanation of why the issue occurred and/or (where appropriate) an apology and an explanation of what will be done to stop a similar situation happening in the future.
- 2.4 Any resolutions and actions that are agreed with the student must be kept on record and communicated to the student in writing within 10 working days. This written response to their complaint, copied to [support@pointblankmusicschool.com](mailto:support@pointblankmusicschool.com), will either:
  - Detail the proposed resolution; OR
  - If no resolution has been proposed, explain why the resolution has not been considered to be possible.
- 2.5 Should the student not accept the proposed remedy at the Early Resolution stage, they may choose to raise the complaint formally. Escalation to the Formal Stage can progress without a written informal outcome.

### Stage 2: Formal Complaint

- 2.6 Formal complaints must be submitted to Point Blank within:
  - 21 working days of the event which has given rise to the complaint; or, if a series of events has given rise to a complaint,
  - 21 working days of the final event in the series; or
  - 21 working days of receipt of their informal outcome (whichever is later).Complaints received outside of this timescale, without good reason, will not normally be considered.
- 2.7 Complaints must normally be submitted using the complaints form available on the student dashboard and from a member of the Student Experience Team. Completed complaints forms must be submitted to [support@pointblankmusicschool.com](mailto:support@pointblankmusicschool.com).

- 2.8 Disabled students may request reasonable adjustments to this procedure including submitting their complaint in an alternative format. Students are advised to speak with a member of the Student Experience Team in the first instance where they will be able to receive support in arranging any adjustments where reasonable.
- 2.9 The complaints form must be completed in its entirety and must detail:
- The causes for concern and/ or the issues which have led to the complaint;
  - The requested outcome;
  - Any supporting evidence/ documentation relevant to the complaint.
  - Details of any informal/ early resolution sought and/ or offered.
- 2.10 A member of the Student Support team will confirm receipt of the complaint within 7 working days of submission. Students are encouraged to follow up if they haven't received confirmation within this time, to check they have submitted their form correctly.
- 2.11 The Student Experience Manager (or Designated Nominee) will appoint an appropriate lead investigator for the case.
- 2.12 The Lead Investigator will then convene meetings with relevant staff to consider the key aspects of the case and glean all information required to assess the circumstances around the event that gave rise to the complaint.
- 2.13 Following a detailed investigation, the Lead Investigator will then convene the Complaints Outcome Panel and present to it their findings.
- 2.14 The Complaints Outcome Panel will decide whether:
- the complaint should be progressed through other procedures; or
  - there is no reasonable justification for the complaint, in which case the complaint shall be terminated as **not upheld**; or
  - there is reasonable justification for the complaint, and therefore the complaint **is upheld**; or
  - there is some reasonable justification for the complaint, and therefore the complaint **is partially upheld**.

Where the complaint is upheld or partially upheld, the Complaints Outcome Panel will discuss and settle upon the agreed outcome. This may be the outcome requested by the student on their complaints form or may be what the Panel agree to be a more appropriate outcome.

- 2.15 The Lead Investigator will communicate the outcome to the student, in writing, detailing the investigation process and Panel decision.
- 2.16 Students will normally receive an outcome within 21 working days of submitting their complaint. Should this timeline need to be extended, the Lead Investigator will inform the student as soon as possible and frequently update the student on the progress of their complaint.

### **Stage 2: Formal Stage Review (for Service Issues)**

- 2.17 This section applies to students on Higher Education courses at Point Blank London and Online only. It does not apply to students on professional programmes.

- 2.18 If a student is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, they may request a Formal Stage Review. A review can only be requested on the following grounds:
- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage;
  - a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable;
  - new evidence has come to light that could make a difference to the outcome and which the student could not reasonably have provided earlier in the process.
- 2.19 The review stage will not normally consider the case afresh or involve further investigation. A complaint must have been considered at stage 2 before a review can be requested.
- 2.20 Reviews must be requested in writing, via email, within 21 working days of the outcome of stage 2. Requests are to be submitted to support@pointblankmusicschool.com
- 2.21 Upon receipt of the review request, the Student Experience Manager (or appropriate designated nominee) will appoint a member of staff as **Reviewer**. This member of staff, where possible, will not have been involved in any previous stage of the complaint.
- 2.22 The Reviewer will do an initial assessment to check that the student's request for review is in time and meets the grounds set in item 2.17 above.
- 2.23 If the request is not in time or does not meet the grounds set in item 2.17, the review will be rejected. If the request is rejected at this stage, the student will be issued with a completion of procedures letter.
- 2.24 The Reviewer will complete the review and determine an appropriate outcome based on the grounds on which the review was requested.
- 2.25 Should the review not be upheld, the Reviewer will provide an outcome, in writing, to the student along with a Completion of Procedures letter.
- 2.26 Should the review be upheld, the Reviewer will provide an outcome to the student, in writing, within 21 working days of receipt of the review request. The letter will detail the remedy offered and when Point Blank will implement the remedy. The student may request a Completion of Procedures letter at this point.

**Alternative Stage 2: Formal Stage Review for Academic Matters**

- 2.27 If the complaint relates to issues affecting academic matters, the student may request a **Collaborative Partner University Level Review (CPULR)** from Middlesex University.
- 2.28 To request a CPULR, the student is required to submit the following to Student Complaints department at Middlesex University (stcomplaints@mdx.ac.uk) within 20 working days of receiving written confirmation of the final outcome of stage one (see above):
- The CPULR (Collaborative Partner University Review) form available on the UniHub;
  - The formal stage outcome letter issued to you by Point Blank;
  - Any other supporting documentation.
- 2.29 A Collaborative Partner University Level Review can only be requested on the following grounds:
- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage;
  - a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable;

- new evidence has come to light that could make a difference to the outcome and which the student could not reasonably have provided earlier in the process.
- 2.30 Full details of the CPULR process can be found in section C of the Middlesex University Student Complaints and Grievances procedures here: <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies#policy-statements>

### **Office of the Independent Adjudicator**

- 2.31 Following the outcome of the review stage, the student may choose to submit the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for independent review. Information to help the student decide whether or not to submit to the OIA will be provided in the Completion of Procedures letter.
- 2.32 Complaints can normally only be submitted to the OIA once a Completion of Procedures has been issued.
- 2.33 Full information and eligibility details can be found at [www.oia.org.uk](http://www.oia.org.uk)

## **3. PROCEDURE SCOPE**

- 3.1 Elements of this procedure apply to both Higher Education students and Professional students at Point Blank, and other elements apply to Higher Education students only.
- 3.2 Items 2.1 to 2.16 apply to all students on Higher Education and Professional courses at Point Blank London and UK Online.
- 3.3 Items 2.17 to 2.33 apply to students on Higher Education programmes at Point Blank London and Online only.

## **4. PROCEDURE OWNER**

This procedure is under the responsibility of the Student Engagement and Experience Committee. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this procedure is carried out in line with Point Blank's Quality Assurance Framework.

The Student Engagement and Experience Committee delegates the operational responsibility of this procedure to the following staff:

- General Manager
- Registrar
- Head of Quality
- Head of School and Facilities
- Head of Education and Curriculum
- Quality Manager
- Student Experience Manager
- Quality and Academic Support Officer.

## **5. EXHIBITS, APPENDICES AND FORMS**

- Complaints Form

## **6. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Internal
- Student Complaints and Grievances Policy
- 6.2 External

- Middlesex University Academic Regulations
- OIA Good Practice Framework

## **7. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW**

Version: 1

Approved on:

Approved by: Academic Board

Date of Next Review: August 2024