

Ashton on Mersey SCITT
Complaints Policy

Date amended: 20th July 2023

Aim

Ashton on Mersey SCITT is committed to ensuring all concerns expressed by a trainee, mentor or any individual or organisation be resolved as quickly as possible without the need for escalation. However, where resolution is not achieved quickly, this policy sets out the formal procedure should a person raising the complaint remain dissatisfied.

Scope

Stage 1 - Informal resolution to concern (Appendix 1)

Stage 2 - Formal resolution to concern (Appendix 2)

Policy

We will listen to all concerns, complaints, suggestions and compliments of all our customers and see them as opportunities to improve the quality of the service we provide.

Line Managers or other delegated managers will investigate a complaint about a member of the SCITT. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

Ashton on Mersey SCITT will retain a written record of all complaints, the actions taken and at what stage they were resolved.

All written records, statements and correspondence relating to an individual complaint will be treated with complete confidentiality.

Written information sent out to a complainant may be in either electronic format or in 'hard copy' as the SCITT sees fit.

The principles applied by all SCITT staff in applying the complaints procedure are that implementation of the procedure will be:

- Impartial
- Non-adversarial
- Timely
- Objective
- Evidence based
- Respects confidentiality
- Fair
- Addresses all of the points at issue
- Provides an effective response
- Provides appropriate redress where necessary
- Is reported to the SCITT management team so that services can be improved where necessary

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the SCITT can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. To that end, staff will be periodically made aware of the procedures so that they know what to do when they receive a concern or a complaint.

At each stage of the complaints procedure an indication of what resolution the complainant is seeking should be given. In considering how a complaint may be resolved the member of staff will give due regard to the seriousness of the complaint. It may be appropriate in order to bring the complaint to a resolution for the member of staff to offer either:

An explanation

An apology

Reassurance of steps that have been taken to prevent a recurrence of the relevant events

Reassurance that the School will undertake a review of its policies in light of the complaint

The purpose of this procedure is to identify all of the facts that are pertinent to the complaint so that it can be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. However, there may be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedure being followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant then tries to reopen the same issue, the Accounting Officer or Chair of the Strategic Board is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

The complaints procedure sets out the time limits for each stage of the complaints processes. However, where a complaint is of a particularly complex nature, or further investigations are required to ascertain facts, new time limits can be set. The complainant will be sent the details of any changes to the deadlines with an explanation for the delay.

The SCITT reserves the right to request that at any time the complaint be put in writing to avoid potential ambiguity.

Aims and Values:

- To provide the best possible service to our customers (trainees, SCITT staff and partner schools) and to always be looking for opportunities to improve it
- To recognise that on some occasions things go wrong and learn from our mistakes
- To listen to the concerns, complaints, suggestions and compliments of all our trainees and to see them as opportunities to improve the quality of the service we provide
- To respond to all concerns and complaints initially within three working days
- To provide a variety of opportunities for our trainees to let us know what they think about the service we provide
- To provide support, advice and training for our staff in dealing with complaints
- To monitor and analyse comments received and build the analysis into our on-going policy review process and SCITT improvement planning

Our Strategy:

- Procedures in place for *registering* a concern/ complaint about any aspect of the service provided by the SCITT by a choice of routes, this will be reviewed annually

- Procedures collated through the SCITT google doc by a member to the SCITT team. The Course Leader to inform all mentors and trainees of the correct procedure and to monitor all concerns/complaints.
- Clearly defined stages for hearing complaints with the final stage being an appeal to the strategic board

Success Criteria:

- A log of concerns and comments from a cross-section of our trainees
- Evidence of a positive approach by staff in dealing with concerns, complaints or suggestions from our trainees

Evaluation:

- Director of SCITT – audit of evidence/ action
- SCITT Programmes Manager and SCITT Lead – audit of evidence/ action
- Ofsted Assessment

Guidelines to dealing with Complaints & Concerns

Our complaints policy outlines the SCITT's commitment to the provision of the best possible service to our colleagues (trainees, SCITT staff and partner schools).

It is important that this commitment is demonstrated in everything we say or do as a SCITT.

The receipt of a concern or complaint (whether justified or not) is our opportunity to evaluate the service we provide and to show that we genuinely care about our colleagues and that we are looking for continuous improvement.

The policy commits us to responding to concerns or complaints initially within three working days.

If at all possible, the member of staff receiving the concern should try to resolve the issue on the spot without the need for formal procedures. If this happens, always remember to ask the complainant if they are happy with the outcome.

In order to analyse and publish our response to complaints and to improve our service as a result, it is essential to record brief details when the concern reaches us, from whatever source, and annotates it with a note indicating the action taken. The SCITT have created a google form to log all complaints/concerns as we receive them. This is then reviewed by the SCITT Lead SCITT Programmes Manager and Director of SCITT.

Procedure for dealing with complaints

Minor concerns

- Deal with immediately if possible

All other concerns/complaints

- Respond within three school days
- Deal with the matter yourself or pass on immediately to the most appropriate member of staff
- Inform the complainant what you have done or plan to do
- Keep calm at all times when dealing with the complainer

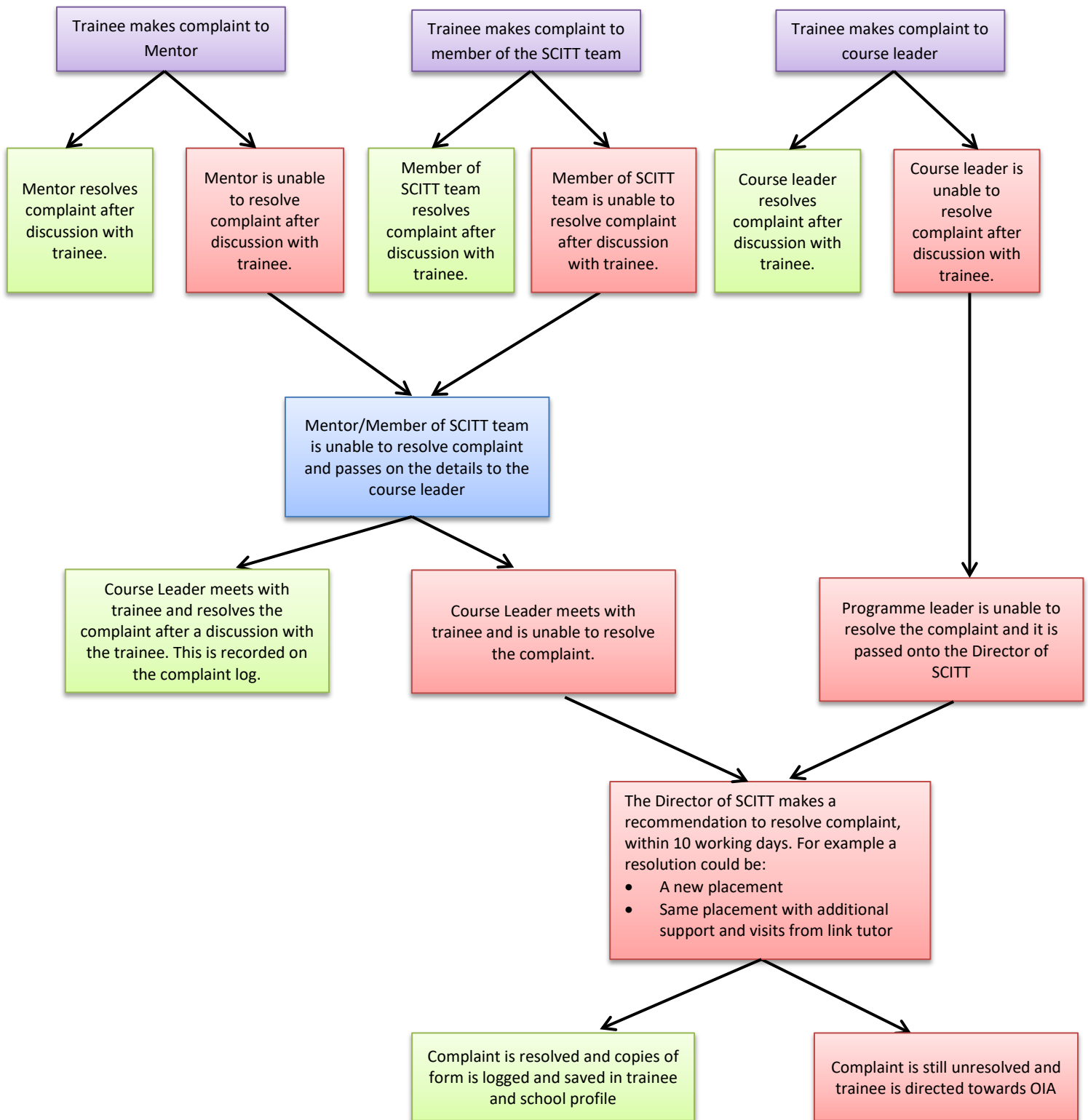
- Ask them if they are happy with the way the matter was dealt with – even if they may not agree with the action taken
- Send through the concern/complaint to a member of the SCITT team who will then log onto the google form, this can be completed either via email or on the phone.
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled and wishes to take the matter further, the staff member dealing with the issue should pass it on to for action by a member of the SCITT Management Team.
- If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled and wishes to take the matter further, the matter should be referred to the Director of SCITT.
- If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled and wishes to take the matter further he/she should be informed that the final stage of the complaints process is to appeal to the members of the strategic board
- If the complainant feels that the SCITT have not dealt with the matter the way they would have liked, they the SCITT should direct them to the OIA for further investigation

The complaints log

The main purpose in logging complaints is to improve the service that we provide to our trainees and learn from any mistakes that we make or those occasions when dips in our performance have been identified. It is not about attributing blame.

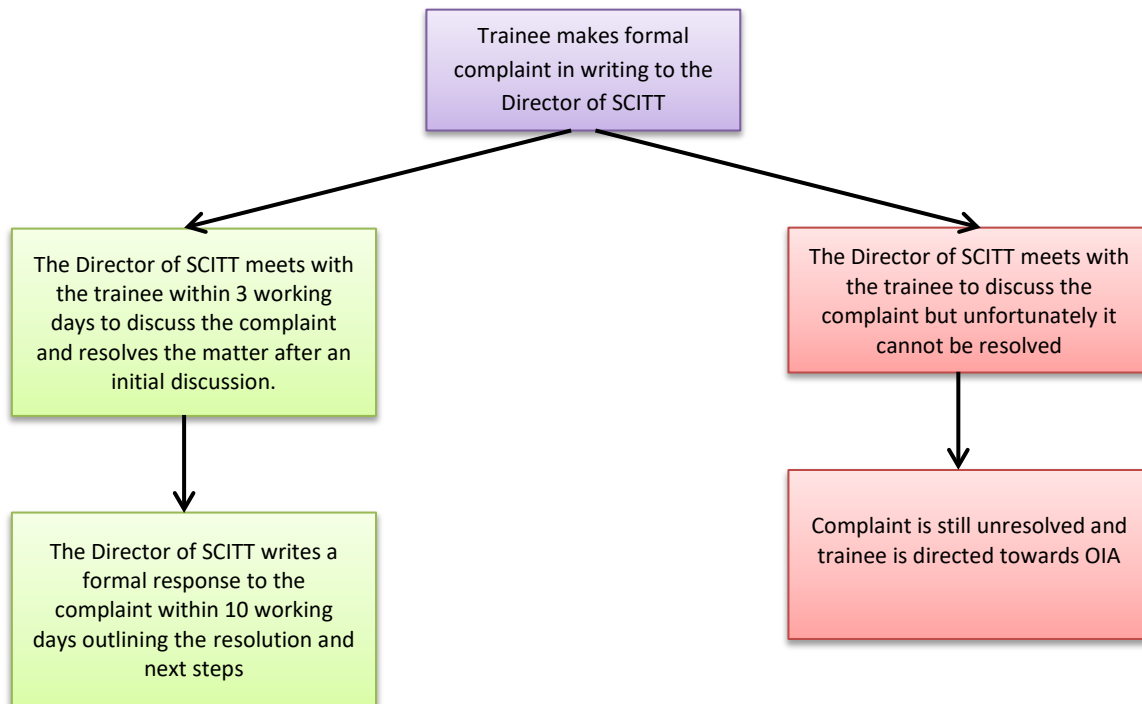
Our organisation is very complex and all staff have their role to play in dealing with complaints. The SCITT Management team will co-ordinate the complaints log and keep it in one place, it is the responsibility of the SCITT Lead to monitor the complaints.

Appendix 1
Ashton on Mersey SCITT – Informal Complaints Flowchart



NB If the complaint is regarding the trainee’s placement then throughout the process the trainee remains in their current placement school unless the situation has become intolerable and another placement has to be considered with immediate effect.

Appendix 2
Ashton on Mersey SCITT - Formal Complaints Flowchart



NB If the complaint is regarding the trainee's placement then throughout the process the trainee remains in their current placement school unless the situation has become intolerable and another placement has to be considered with immediate effect.

Appendix 3
Ashton on Mersey SCITT – Complaint report form

Personal Details

Name:	
Address:	
Email:	
Contact Number:	
Programme:	
Programme Leader:	

Complaint details

Please provide a brief description of the complaint

*Please submit this form to the Director of SCITT
Please keep a copy for your records
You will receive a written decision within 10 working days.*

Trainee Signature	
Date	

Director of SCITT Response

Details of resolution and next steps

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Director of SCITT signature	
Trainee Signature	
Date	