

Inspiring Future Teachers

Grievance Procedure for Apprentices

Including reporting on bullying and harassment

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Reviewed – Annually

Responsible Body – IFT Partnership Board





1. Aims and Values

Inspiring Future Teachers (IFT) is committed to ensuring that all apprentices are treated fairly and with consideration. We recognise that we have a responsibility to ensure high and consistent standards in our role as a Training Provider. We recognise the right of the apprentice to lodge a grievance relating to their training/employment fairly and without unreasonable delay.

IFT have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse ensuring a safe, respectful environment for trainees, staff and partners.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all IFT Trainee Teachers and Apprentices and covers complaints pertaining to:

- ITT Colleagues
- Placement Schools
- The IFT Programme
- Health and Safety Issues
- The Working Environment
- Harassment and Discrimination.
- Interpersonal relationships or bullying

All issues under this procedure must be dealt with speedily, with no unreasonable delays to meetings, decisions or appeals. Reasonable advance notice must be given for any planned meetings and adequate time for preparation should be afforded to the apprentice and any other person or persons related to the grievance. All apprentices have the right to be supported, advised or represented by third parties at any point during this process.

This policy applies to all Inspiring Future Teachers trainees and staff, and to any individual encountered during training, including:

- Mentor teachers, placement school staff, and partner organisations.
- Apprentices' peers and others engaged in programme-related activities.
- All modes of communication and interaction (in-person, online, digital platforms, social media, etc.).



3. Definitions of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying

Bullying is repeated or persistent unwanted behaviours that:

- Intentionally cause hurt, embarrassment, humiliation, or distress.
- Create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.
- May involve misuse of power or authority. Examples include verbal abuse, social exclusion, spreading rumours, persistent criticism, and undermining someone's work or reputation.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (e.g., age, disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, religion, sexual orientation) that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This includes conduct which an individual finds offensive, even if not directed at them specifically. Harassment can be a single serious incident or a series of behaviours.

4. Principles

Inspiring Future Teachers will:

- Treat any report of bullying or harassment seriously and take appropriate action.
- Support any person who raises a genuine concern in good faith, protecting them from victimisation.
- Ensure confidentiality as far as possible.
- Uphold legal obligations under the **Equality Act 2010** and other relevant UK legislation.

5. Expected Behaviour

All trainees, apprentices and staff are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, courtesy, and respect.
- Listen and respond constructively to feedback.
- Avoid behaviour that could reasonably be perceived as intimidating, belittling, offensive, or discriminatory.
- Engage professionally in all training-related interactions



6. Using this Procedure

- 6.1 It is in everyone's interest for problems or concerns to be resolved before they develop into major difficulties for all concerned. Wherever possible, apprentices should try to resolve any concerns by raising them informally with their Mentor, Professional Tutor or Hub Lead. To facilitate this, all such colleagues should adopt an open-door policy for communication and consultation and seek to address and resolve problems and concerns quickly and fairly. However, sometimes this is not possible, and this is where the grievance procedure should be used.
- 6.2 A grievance should be raised within a reasonable timescale of the decision or act causing the complaint. Where the complaint raises issues of a historical nature, it will not normally be dealt with under this procedure, except where the circumstances relate to an on-going matter.
- 6.3 If you have difficulty at any stage of the procedure because of a disability, you should discuss the situation with the Hub Lead as soon as possible.
- 6.4 All grievances relating to placement schools should be raised with the Professional Tutor/Mentor in the first instance. However, if the grievance relates to the Professional Tutor/Mentor or if it becomes clear that the grievance is one which only the Hub team can resolve it should be referred to the Hub Lead.

7. Mediation

- 7.1 Mediation can play an important role in resolving problems, particularly in cases where interpersonal conflict or competing interests form an important element in the situation precipitating the grievance. Mediation is encouraged at all stages of these procedures.

8. Raising a Formal Grievance

- 8.1 If the grievance cannot be resolved informally you should set out the grievance in writing to the Hub Lead. Where it is not appropriate for the Hub Lead to have the details, this may be passed to the Director of IFT. Details of the grievance should include all relevant facts, dates and names of individuals involved.
- 8.2 The person dealing with the grievance will arrange a meeting to be held as soon as is reasonably practicable. He/she will liaise with you to confirm a suitable date and time for the meeting.
- 8.3 The purpose of the meeting is to enable you to explain your grievance and how you would like it to be resolved and to assist the person hearing the grievance to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations made.
- 8.4 If required, the person hearing the grievance may wish to carry out an investigation following the initial meeting. The breadth of the investigation required will depend upon the nature of the complaint and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing documents.
- 8.5 Following the meeting and/or investigation, you will be informed of the outcome of the grievance, with reasons, including any actions, as quickly as possible. This may be verbally at the close of the meeting and confirmed in writing or once a decision has been reached following further investigation or taking advice.



9. Right of representation

9.1 An apprentice can bring a representative to any meeting held under this procedure. The representative can be either a trade union representative, a school member of staff or a fellow trainee. At meetings the representative can make representations or ask questions but cannot answer questions on your behalf. Meetings will not be unreasonably delayed due to the non-availability of a chosen representative.

10. Raising an appeal

10.1 Where you feel your grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved you may appeal within 10 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of the grievance meeting. Appeals must be made in writing to the signatory on the outcome letter.

Appeals will be dealt with in line with the IFT Appeals and Complaints Procedure.

11. Retention of written records

11.1 A written record of any grievance will be retained along with any decisions taken and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process. Records will be treated as confidential and be kept on your file.

If the apprentice is still not satisfied that their case has been correctly handled, they may refer their complaint to the Office for the Independent Adjudicator, details of which can be found at

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

or via post

Office for the Independent Adjudicator
Second Floor
Abbey Gate
57-75 Kings Road
Reading
RG1 3AB

Telephone: 0118 959 9813

Alternatively, apprentices can escalate their complaint to the Department for Education, more information can be found here [Complain about a further education college or apprenticeship - GOV.UK](#)

Monitoring

The Hub Lead will monitor the implementation of the procedure by:

- Ensuring trainee awareness of the procedure, if required
- Ensuring criteria are clear and are applied consistently



Publishing Procedure

This Procedure will be made available to all those involved in the IFT Partnership.

Review

Regular reviews of this procedure are required in order that it adequately reflects the state of the law and the advice of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and to ensure its fitness for purpose.

For review: May 2027