



# **SPENCER ALLIANCE**

for LEADERSHIP & TEACHING

**Course Participant Complaints and Appeals Process**

**2020/2021**



The Spencer Alliance of Leadership and Teaching wish to ensure that every person, from course participants to leaders and assessors, engaged with our programme and course delivery, is treated fairly and equitably at all times. This includes all arms of work:

- **George Spencer Teaching School Alliance**
- **George Spencer TSA as NPQ Provider**
- **George Spencer Academy SCITT**
- **The Derby Research School at Wyndham Primary Academy**
- **Maths Hub East Midlands West**

If you want to make a complaint about a course provided by one of the arms of delivery for the Spencer Alliance for Leadership and Teaching, or if you would like to appeal a decision made, please follow the procedure set out below.

## Contents

Section 1: Making a Complaint.....	2
What is a complaint? .....	2
The complaints we receive may be about.....	2
Resolution of Initial Concerns .....	2
When to raise a formal complaint.....	2
How to make a complaint .....	3
What you need to provide.....	3
Resolving Complaints.....	3
Section 2: Making an Appeal.....	4
What is an appeal? .....	4
Appealing an Assessment Grading at NPQ .....	5





## Section 1: Making a Complaint

### What is a complaint?

We consider a complaint to be any expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided by the Spencer Alliance for Leadership and Teaching. This dissatisfaction might arise from the actions of a member of staff, or from an area or programme of work the Spencer Alliance is involved with.

### The complaints we receive may be about:

- the quality and accuracy of information provided in our earlier responses
- the tone of our correspondence or the attitude of our staff
- the handling and timeliness of the individual's correspondence
- the quality of provision
- the venue

### Resolution of Initial Concerns

Initial or informal concerns or complaints can be made either in person, by telephone or in writing to the facilitator, appropriate administration coordinator or the Director of the Spencer Alliance for Leadership and Teaching. We will try to resolve as many of these complaints as possible at local level by the person who originally dealt with correspondence from that individual. The member of staff will undertake an initial investigation and decide on appropriate action, advising the Spencer Alliance and supporting the organisation in keeping a record of the response.

If the issue is not resolved at this level then it is usually escalated to a more senior line manager or team leader. If the correspondence between both parties continues and the complaint has not been resolved then it becomes necessary to escalate the complaint to the Complaints Manager at the Spencer Academies Trust.

In order to do this, the correspondence will include an explanation of the procedure for making an official complaint to the Spencer Academies Trust, via the Complaints Manager.

### When to raise a formal complaint

When you have tried to resolve your complaint with the individual and this has ultimately failed, then you can register an official complaint to the Spencer Academies Trust via the Complaints Manager and will be provided with the relevant contact details.





## How to make a complaint

You can contact the Spencer Academies Trust's Complaints Manager using one of the following methods:

**Email:** [info@satrust.com](mailto:info@satrust.com)

FAO: Complaints Manager,  
or

**Phone** number; 08455 651 870 (lines are open from 08:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays)

Page | 3

Our staff will take a note of your complaint and arrange for it to be passed to the Complaints Manager.

## What you need to provide

You should provide as much information as possible to allow us to investigate your complaint. This should include some or all of the following:

- your name and a valid email or home address for receipt of reply;
- a clear description of your complaint;
- copies of earlier associated correspondence between yourself and the Academy;

## Investigate the complaint

At this stage, as formal complaint is dealt with following the Complaints Process outlined on the Spencer Academies Trust Policies Page which follows a two stage process.

<http://satrust.com/policies/>

## Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure the organisation will keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. One or more of the following may be appropriate;

- an apology
- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that the event complained about will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review policies in the light of the complaint
- an undertaking to take the complainant's view of how to improve into consideration

If the complainant remains dissatisfied the complaints process will sign post appropriate bodies for complainant to take their concerns further.





## Section 2: Making an Appeal

### What is an appeal?

An appeal is defined as a request for reconsideration of a decision to reject an application or remove (withdraw) a candidate from the programme. Should a rejected applicant or a withdrawn candidate consider that either:

- The Spencer Alliance for Leadership and Teaching and its arms of delivery have not adhered to its own policies or procedures or is in breach of any national policies or relevant legal requirements: or
- there is evidence of bias or prejudice against the applicant/candidate

then s/he is entitled to ask for a review of the decision to reject/withdraw.

Appeals may also be made after a 'Not Met' outcome of summative assessment - there will be a programme specific procedure to follow for this.

An applicant/candidate wishing to lodge an appeal should do so within 21 days of the date of the letter, informing him or her of the decision on his or her application/withdrawal.

If an appeal or complaint is lodged, the relevant Coordinator will contact the applicant to acknowledge receipt of the appeal or complaint. The Spencer Alliance for Leadership and Teaching will endeavour to deal with any appeal or complaint within 28 days. The applicant will be kept informed of the progress of his or her appeal or complaint if the period of investigation is likely to exceed 30 working days.

The coordinator will investigate the circumstances of the appeal or complaint consulting relevant staff including, but not limited to, staff in the department which oversees the programme to which the applicant sought admission/ was participating in. In certain circumstances, the results of the investigation may be passed to a Director of the organisation for a ruling.

During the course of the investigation, the applicant may be asked to provide further information on, or clarification of, any points made in his or her initial correspondence.





NPQ accredited by



Page | 5

## Appealing an Assessment Grading at NPQ

The George Spencer Teaching School Alliance is accredited by the DfE as an NPQ provider.

Where a participant feels that the mark they have been awarded at assessment is incorrect, they may appeal. We commission the services of NPQ Online for external quality assurance and impartial assessment. As an NPQ Provider, we follow their appeals process as outlined in their handbooks:

Please note that if their assessment is a fail, it will already have been moderated – essentially, assessed by two separate assessors and it is therefore unlikely that the assessment is incorrect. 10% of assessments are moderated internally, and 10% externally. NPQonline has 100% accuracy in its assessments as judged by external moderation.



To appeal, a participant should first contact their provider, and discuss the reasons with their provider why they would like to appeal. If we as a provider agree that there is a case, the Teaching School will contact NPQonline as it may be a simple issue to resolve.

For a full appeal, the full assessment fee will need to be paid in advance by the Teaching School. This will be refunded if, at reassessment, a significant change is made to the assessment score of three or more marks, or a fail is overturned to a pass.

The original assessment, which NPQonline will have retained for this purpose, will be sent for an assessor to assess 'blind' – i.e. the assessor will not have previously seen the assessment, nor have been given any other knowledge. They will not be told this is an appeal or a re-mark. Timescales are the same as for assessment, but should be much quicker in most cases.

You will receive an indication as to the outcome within two weeks of the appeal being lodged, although this will be indicative until the assessment has gone through the external moderation process.

