

PR Academy Student Complaint Procedure

Introduction

It is our policy to resolve as quickly and fairly as possible any complaint that is made about a programme of study; a service provided by PR Academy or the treatment of a student by another student or a staff member of the PR Academy.

Students are defined as those enrolled for a qualification delivered by the PR Academy.

This procedure relates to the delivery of qualifications. Complaints that are appropriate to the awarding body (for example, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations) should be directed to that body as explained in their student handbook.

Scope

The Student Complaint Procedure applies to complaints:

- from students about their educational experience;
- about a service provided by the PR Academy;
- concerning discrimination by the PR Academy on the grounds of gender, race, faith, age, disability or sexual orientation;
- about the behaviour of a tutor or course manager towards a student.
- about the behaviour of a student or students.

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive and, where appropriate, complaints about other matters will be considered under the Student Complaints Procedure.

Principles

The principles which underpin the Student Complaints Procedure are:

- students will not suffer disadvantage as a consequence of making a genuine complaint;
- the PR Academy will seek to resolve complaints as quickly as possible within the available resources and to find resolutions which are reasonable and acceptable to all parties;
- students will be allowed reasonable time to seek guidance and assistance in connection with any aspect of the complaints process;
- all parties are expected to make reasonable efforts to resolve matters on an informal basis before moving to the formal stages of the process;
- any investigations undertaken as part of the formal complaints process will be conducted by individuals who are independent i.e. have no prior knowledge of the student or of the case;

- all parties to a complaint will be kept informed at all stages of the progress of any investigations into the matters raised and will be informed in writing of the outcome of the process, the reasons for any decisions taken and any proposed remedies;
- the PR Academy will deal with complaints on a confidential basis but students should recognise that it may be necessary to disclose details of a complaint to other persons or organisations for the purposes of investigating the complaint and seeking an effective resolution;
- where matters are within the PR Academy's control, it will ensure that appropriate remedial action is taken to resolve a complaint including addressing aspects of its operations which are identified through the complaints process as requiring improvement.

Responsibilities

All parties involved in a complaint are expected to act courteously, fairly and reasonably towards each other and to comply with the requirements of the procedures by completing complaints' documentation, adhering to any deadlines, responding appropriately to any requests for information or attendance at meetings and undertaking any reasonable action required in pursuance of a satisfactory remedy.

The PR Academy will investigate all complaints brought under the formal part of the procedure, however, it reserves the right to refuse to consider any student complaints which are thought, after initial investigation, to be unreasonable, vexatious or malicious

Process

Informal Procedure – local resolution

Students should try to resolve matters of concern informally first through approaches to appropriate personnel such as tutors, or course leaders. In many instances, these people will be best placed to respond to the complaint and to resolve it quickly and effectively. If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved after this discussion, the student has the right to address the issue through the formal stages of the process.

Formal Procedure

The formal stages begin when a student makes a complaint in writing to Ann Pilkington, Chloe Kane or Kevin Ruck, the PR Academy directors.

PR Academy will log the complaint and issue a written acknowledgement of receipt to the student.

An investigation into the matters complained of will be undertaken promptly and in order to investigate the complaint. We may need to request further information from the student and so may ask to meet him or her.

A PR Academy director will provide a written response to the parties involved within 5 working days of the completion of any investigation, which itself should be completed no later than 15 working days after the receipt of the completed complaint form. If it is not possible to complete the investigation within this time period, the student will be advised in writing of the reasons for the delay together with a deadline by which it is expected that the investigation will be completed. Following completion of the investigation, the written response sent to the student will either outline a proposed remedy or explain why there are no grounds to take the matter further and that no action will be taken.

A record will be kept of all formal complaints received and a copy of each written response provided.

Referrals

The PR Academy reserves the right to refer complaints at any stage to an alternative means of resolution, including to a mediation process, if it is considered to be in the best interests of the timely and effective resolution of the complaint.