NOTTING HILL ACADEMY OF MUSIC
STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Version	3.1 for approval
Effective date	On approval
Date for review	November 2027
Policy owner	Head of Quality
Reference points	OIA Good Practice Framework and partnership guidance; applicable BIMM complaints and academic appeals procedures; Equality Act 2010; consumer protection law and current CMA guidance.
Audience/handling notes	Public
Dissemintation and implementation plan	This Student Complaints and Grievances Policy will be published on the NHAM website and student portal for reference by students, staff, and all other relevant stakeholders. Lecturers will receive training in how to apply this policy and its procedures. They will also be directed to where it is published. The Administration Manager will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedures to academic staff; the Administration Manager will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy and procedures to support staff. Students will be informed by email that this information is available on the student portal and NHAM website.
Date approved	Pending approval

1 Policy Statement

NHAM treats complaints seriously, fairly and without disadvantage to the student. This policy applies to current and former NHAM students and covers teaching, support, facilities, administration, communications and the delivery of promised services. A person may seek advice before deciding whether to complain.

The Academy Manager receives and logs complaints. The Chief Executive appoints an unconflicted investigator and reviewer. Where the concern involves the usual lead or Chief Executive, an independent governance nominee or external reviewer manages it. The Head of Quality coordinates the BIMM interface under the Operations Handbook.

2 Objectives

Resolve concerns promptly, give a fair hearing, provide reasoned outcomes and implement effective remedies. The student can use a representative, accessible communication and reasonable adjustments. A complainant, witness or respondent must not face retaliation.

Do not require a student to raise a concern with the person complained about or to complete informal resolution where inappropriate. Explain overlapping safeguarding, harassment, conduct, academic appeal and admissions routes, agree who coordinates the issues and avoid making the student start again.

3 Student Complaints and Grievances

Teaching quality, lost work, delayed feedback, missing teaching, facilities and administrative problems can be complaints. Early local resolution may be suitable but does not remove access to the formal process. Preserve statutory and contractual rights and the ability to seek appropriate external advice.

Normally raise a complaint within six calendar months of the event or when the student could reasonably have known of it. Consider a late complaint where there is a good reason, including illness, disability, fear of disclosure or a continuing issue. Give reasons for a refusal to consider it.

Group complaints may use a nominated representative with the group's agreement. Consider anonymous information where it indicates risk or a wider issue, explaining the limits on investigation and individual remedies.

4 Principles

Handle information sensitively and share what is necessary for a fair process. Explain confidentiality limits. Give a person affected by an allegation a clear account and a reasonable opportunity to respond. Record conflicts and separate investigation from review.

No fee is charged to complain. Academic judgement is addressed through the appropriate regulations and appeal grounds. Seeking informal clarification does not extend an academic appeal deadline, and a complaint must not obstruct urgent safeguarding action.

5 Procedures

A student can submit a written account to the Academy Manager or ask Student Services for help using an accessible alternative. Include the issue, dates, relevant evidence, steps already taken and the outcome sought. The form is helpful but lack of a completed form must not prevent a clear complaint being received.

Acknowledge a formal complaint within three working days. Identify the case lead, scope, process and expected timetable. Where the concern is time-sensitive, assess immediate academic or safety arrangements while the complaint is considered.

6 Stages and escalation

Stage 1 early resolution. A relevant member of staff can try to resolve the issue, normally within ten working days. Keep a brief record and confirm any agreed action. The student may go directly to Stage 2 where local discussion would be inappropriate.

Stage 2 formal consideration. An impartial investigator gathers the relevant records, discusses the concern with the student and others where needed and allows representations on material evidence. Normally issue a reasoned outcome within 20 working days after the complaint and necessary information are received. If more time is needed, explain why and provide updates.

The formal outcome sets out the complaint, findings, reasons, remedy, action owner, implementation date and how to request review. Remedies may include correction, an explanation, service action, reassessment through an authorised academic route, an appropriate financial remedy, or other proportionate action. The decision-maker must have authority to offer the remedy.

Stage 3 review. Request review within ten working days of the formal outcome, giving the grounds.

Consider late requests with good reason. Grounds include a material procedural error, relevant new evidence unavailable earlier for good reason, bias, or an unreasonable outcome or inadequate remedy. The reviewer is independent of the original handling.

The Operations Handbook determines whether NHAM or BIMM conducts the final review. NHAM forwards the record promptly and explains the correct contact and deadline. Do not add an extra compulsory stage by asking a student to repeat the formal complaint.

7 Monitoring and implementation

Aim to complete formal consideration and review across NHAM and BIMM within 90 calendar days. Explain exceptional extensions and keep the student informed. Track promised remedies and check implementation with the student.

Keep restricted case files and a minimal complaints log, with a clear retention period and preservation for live review or litigation. Governance and Education Committees receive de-identified themes, overdue cases and improvement actions.

8 Final review and independent redress

The final outcome must state whether further internal steps remain and which organisation issues the Completion of Procedures letter. For BIMM-awarded students, follow the agreed partner allocation. Where a complaint is not upheld after the final stage, arrange the Completion of Procedures letter without requiring a separate request.

An eligible student can apply to the OIA within 12 months of the Completion of Procedures letter. Explain the right, deadline and access to advice. Applicant-only matters and provision outside the OIA scheme need the appropriate separate route.

Before approval, confirm the NHAM/BIMM final review, contact details and Completion of Procedures responsibility in the schedule and match the handbook and website.