



# COMPLAINTS POLICY

MIDLANDS ACADEMY OF DANCE AND DRAMA

VERSION 2.0

© MADD, Richmond House, 3 Canal Street, Nottingham NG1 7EG.

## Complaints Policy

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### Version Control

VERSION	REVIEWER NAME	DATE	NEXT REVIEW	COMMENTS
1.0				

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### Introduction

Midlands Academy of Dance & Drama (MADD) was founded in 1967 by the Principal, Frances Clayton and is based in Nottingham. MADD offers diplomas in Professional Dance, Musical Theatre, classes to 3-18-year-olds, and qualifications in Teacher Training in Dance with the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA).

We sincerely hope that there should never be the need to complain, but in the unlikely event then, any complaints will be dealt with in a friendly, warm, and professional manner.

Beyond complaints, we welcome all feedback on what we are doing, whether it be related to what we are good at, who in the organisation is adding value, what our students would like to see more or less of, or general feedback on how we can improve.

This policy aims to provide all stakeholders with a means to make a complaint, give compliments, or provide other feedback and outlines how we manage such information.

### Scope

This policy applies to all MADD staff, including employees, agency workers, self-employed contractors, apprentices, and volunteers who are, by the nature of their position, required to work for or on behalf of the organisation.

This policy also applies in part to the students accessing our services, their parents or guardians, and other stakeholders who need to complain or would like to provide feedback.

### Principles

- We believe that our students and all stakeholders have a right to tell us what they think about what we do and how we do it.
- We are committed to using this feedback as it helps us to improve.
- We will always try to resolve difficulties informally, but in some circumstances, we will escalate the issue and deal with it as a formal complaint.
- We aim to resolve all complaints promptly and sensitively.

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### Definitions

A **complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction which requires a response.

A **complainant** is a person making the complaint, whether on behalf of themselves or another.

The person about whom the complaint is made is referred to as the **subject**.

### Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for the following:

- Responding to informal complaints and feedback warmly and professionally.
- Providing first-line assistance in the event of harm.
- Recording the details of informal complaints and general feedback made in person or over the telephone.
- Passing complaints and other feedback to the Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer and Principal promptly.

The Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer, along with the Principal, is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing all complaints, compliments, and general feedback in a timely manner.
- Using feedback to shape the service where appropriate.
- Passing on compliments to the recognised parties.
- Feeding back where comments warrant it.
- Managing more serious complaints in line with the procedure below.
- Providing further support in the event of harm.
- Seeking and obtaining mediation and/or specialist assistance where necessary.
- Self-referring MADD to the Local Authority, Safeguarding Board, Health and Safety Executive, awarding body, or other governing body as required.

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- Conducting reviews of the issues raised in complaints and, where necessary, implementing an action plan to prevent a recurrence.

## Policy

### Our Objectives

Our objective is simply not to have any complaints and complete stakeholder satisfaction, however, in the unlikely event of any issues - we have outlined our complaints procedure below.

We will endeavour to resolve all complaints promptly at no additional cost to the complainant.

However, there are some areas that we cannot control or be held responsible for, including:

- Any failures from third parties when due diligence in using their services has already been undertaken.
- A conflict between parties that we have no influence on.
- Complaints outside of the scope of members of the organisation to resolve.

If a serious allegation is made, MADD will:

- Involve the Board of Trustees, who will work with the Principal to investigate the matter, and, where necessary, seek impartial advice and guidance from our Human Resources partner; and if required
- Self-refer to any appropriate bodies/authorities to ensure that such complaints are dealt with, escalated, and investigated transparently and appropriately.

### Where to Complain and Leave Feedback

#### **Informal Complaints and General Feedback**

- Students, their parents or guardians, or any other stakeholder is welcome to speak to a member of the MADD team at any time, either face to face or via telephone, who will take action as appropriate, and, where necessary, escalate the feedback or complaint to the Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer and/or Principal.

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### Formal Complaints

Formal complaints should be made in writing and addressed to our Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer.

**Postal Address:** MADD, Century House, Building B, 428 Carlton Hill, Nottingham NG4 1HQ

Please include your name and contact details, plus any information related to the complaint that will help us to investigate (names, dates, times, witness names, etc.).

### Formal Complaints Procedure

#### Stage 1

The complaint will be logged and securely filed for record-keeping and future reference.

The Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer will then proceed to:

- Review the complaint; and
- Offer an apology if appropriate; and/or
- If warranted, further investigate the complaint; and
- Consider options for a resolution of the complaint should an apology be insufficient, and
- Provide support to the complainant as required.

Complaints relating to a subject in our employment or student will, in most circumstances, require fact-finding interviews to ascertain the details surrounding the incident(s) leading to the complaint.

The objective at this stage is a speedy informal resolution of the issue, and any proposed resolutions will be considered carefully.

When a complaint is upheld, the corrective and/or preventative actions will be detailed to ensure that lessons are learnt.

A letter of conclusion will then be sent to the complainant outlining the findings and proposing a resolution. At this stage, the complaint will be considered closed.

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Our goal is to reply with a resolution within 7 working days of a complaint being received.

### Stage 2

If we cannot resolve the issue to the complainant's satisfaction within Stage 1, this issue will be escalated to a second formal resolution stage.

An appeal to Formal Stage 2 (as an appeal) must be made to the Principal. If the complaint is about the Principal, it would be elevated to the Board of Trustees for further investigation.

Appeals must be submitted within 10 days of the receipt of the outcome of Stage 1 of the procedure.

If required, an impartial member of the leadership team will be chosen to complete a more thorough investigation to ascertain the root cause of the issue by collecting further witness statements and evidence and conducting further interviews.

At this stage, a meeting should be arranged between the complainant and the Principal at the earliest mutual convenience.

During this meeting, the Principal will seek to explore any resolution proposed by the complainant and disclose any further evidence found during any subsequent investigations.

The aim at this stage is again to agree on a mutually satisfactory resolution. However, resolutions must be fair, measured, and appropriate. Therefore, any proposed resolutions we consider to be excessive and unbalanced will not be considered.

We may seek the guidance of professional bodies and other third-party arbitration, such as our Human Resources partner, to reach a satisfactory resolution in a stalemate situation.

Our goal is to reply with a formal resolution within 10 working days of moving from Stage 1 to Stage 2; however, this may be longer.

The facility to agree on a timeframe with the complainant will not be seen as a means of unduly extending the process of responding to complaints but rather as a means of setting a realistic timescale given any circumstances which may arise, the timescale of the investigation, the time required to seek third party guidance, and the arranging of a mutually suitable time to conduct the meeting.

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### Stage 3

If neither Stage 1 nor 2 reaches a resolution, MADD will consider the complaint to be closed as all local resolution has been exhausted.

At this stage, the complainant may wish to explore other routes of making a complaint against the business or its staff through regulatory and other third-party bodies. Examples of our regulatory and awarding bodies are:

- CDMT - Council for Dance & Musical Theatre (for the three-year professional Musical Theatre Diploma course).
- Trinity College London (for the level 6 Trinity Diploma course).

### Complaint Outcomes

At either Stage 1 or 2, MADD may:

- Dismiss the complaint; or
- Partially uphold the complaint; or
- Fully uphold the complaint.

### Reasonable Adjustments

Any complainant with a disability may bring with them a companion to assist them at any time within the process. Where interviews or meetings are conducted, we will make reasonable adjustments to enable individuals with a disability to attend.

### Accompanying or Acting on Behalf of a Minor

Where a student is a minor, they should be accompanied to all formal meetings by their parent or guardian.

A student making a complaint is entitled to bring a parent, guardian, or another companion to accompany them to any formal meeting for support and guidance. However, we ask that the companion is not a member of our staff as this may create a conflict of interest.

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### Providing Other Feedback

To make a comment about our service, simply contact any member of staff or write to one of the Principal or Scheduling, Policy Compliance Officer using the contact details above.

If we feel that feedback should be raised as a complaint or handled under another policy, we will write to the commentator and inform them of the alternative route in which their feedback is being dealt with.

All feedback will be reviewed and used to shape our service in the future.

We aim to respond to the individual providing feedback within 30 working days when a response is warranted.

### Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains compliant with current legislation, meets best practices, and is not discriminatory.

MADD will monitor the number and types of complaints received, and the results will be reviewed by the senior leadership at regular meetings.

Where evidence or trends indicate that our culture, policy, or procedures require intervention, an action plan will be initiated.

The version number on new policies is always 1.0 and should be increased by one whole number each time the policy is edited other than to make simple changes, where they may increase in increments of 0.1.