

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy Reference	GSL/POL/001.3
Last Updated	JUL 2023
Next Review	JUL 2024

General Complaints Procedure.....2

Safeguarding or Candidate Suitability Complaints.....4

Suitability Concerns..... 6

Policy Statement for Candidates who become unsuitable..... 7

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Team9

GSL Education Head Office
 15 Cotton’s Gardens
 London
 E2 8DN
 0207 739 2211
www.gsleducation.com

Complaints Policy

GSL Education is committed to providing a high-level service to our customers. If you do not receive satisfaction from us we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

General Complaints Procedure

Complaints about GSL

If you have a general complaint, please discuss it with your consultant in the first instance so that we can try to resolve your complaint informally. If needed, you can refer it to the Branch Manager by email. Contact details can be found on our [website](#).

Next steps

1. The Branch Manager may invite you to meet to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. We will do this within 5 days.
2. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, the Branch Manager will send you a detailed reply to your complaint. This will include his/her suggestions for resolving the matter. He/she will do this within 5 days of completing his investigation.

If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, please send your complaint in writing to Sarah Andrews (Compliance Manager/DSO) - sarah.andrews@gsleducation.com.

Next steps

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details set out. You can expect to receive our letter within 3 - 5 days of us receiving your complaint.
2. We will record your complaint in our central register within a day of having received it.

3. We will acknowledge your reply to our acknowledgment letter and confirm what will happen next. You can expect to receive our acknowledgement letter within 3 - 5 days of your reply.
4. We will then start to investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps;
 - We may ask the member of staff who dealt with you to reply to your complaint within 5 days of our request;
 - We will then examine the member of staff's reply and the information you have provided for us. If necessary, we may ask you to speak to them. This will take up to 4 days from receiving their reply.
5. Once your complaint is resolved we will send you a summary letter for your records.

At this stage, if you are not satisfied please contact **Kamal Ahmed**, CEO. You can write to him at: GSL Education, 15 Cotton's Gardens, London, E2 8DN.

You can also write to the REC, our trade association of which we are a member, marked 'for the attention of the Consultancy and Compliance Team', REC, Dorset House, 1st Floor, 27 – 45 Stamford Street, London, SE1 9NT.

If we have to change any of the time scales above, we will let you know and explain why.

NOTE: In any event, we will comply with any statutory procedures that may relate to your complaint.

Safeguarding or Candidate Suitability Complaints

GSL Education is committed to providing high quality, fully vetted staff to our clients. If we receive information, evidence, or concerns are raised to suggest a candidate has become unsuitable for work, or that another colleague may be unsuitable to work we will report these concerns immediately to the client and follow the appropriate procedures to investigate and make referrals to the relevant bodies.

Safeguarding Concerns:

By law it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns relating to safeguarding and child protection. If you have any concerns that may suggest that a child is at risk of harm, however insignificant it may seem at the time, (see [Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part 1](#)); you should immediately report your concern to the **DSL** in the work setting (or the Headteacher if your concern relates to the DSL) and to your consultant at GSL who will inform the GSL DSO (**Sarah Andrews, sarah.andrews@gsleducation.com**). This could be from your own observations, referral to you by another adult or a concern disclosed to you by a student.

- You will be asked to put your concerns in writing
- You should provide as much **factual** detail as you can (including dates, times, settings, names of witnesses, sequence of events)
- You should not make any attempt to investigate the issue yourself
- You should follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy within the work setting

**for concerns raised during remote online face-to-face or online tutoring, the same process should be followed and secure recordings may be accessed as part of the investigation process. Be vigilant and aware of signs and symptoms that may indicate abuse or neglect.*

During online or remote tutoring also be aware of the environment for learning, disclosures made during discussions or illustrated through learning tasks, online behaviours of students, any changes in behaviour that seem unusual and changes in attendance patterns.

Next Steps:

A: If a Consultant at GSL is informed of a concern either by a candidate or by a client:

1. Take a written statement or ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing
2. Ensure that the date and time that the concern was raised is recorded as well as the date and time the concern was identified
3. Record whether the candidate or client has informed the relevant school safeguarding team and LADO
4. Inform the Branch Manager and DSO

5. If the referral relates to a candidate – do not discuss the nature of the referral without direction from the Branch Manager and DSO.
6. Follow instructions from Branch Manager and DSO with regards to the next steps (if neither are available, contact another Branch Manager)

B: If a concern is raised to the Branch Manager or DSO about a candidate on placement:

1. Agree with the client whether the candidate's placement should be suspended or terminated (this should not be an automatic response but should be discussed and agreed on a case by case basis.
2. **If the complaint meets the threshold and may lead to a criminal investigation:**
 - terminate the placement and inform the relevant LADO within 1 day, await instruction from the LADO.
 - Do not inform the candidate of the details of the complaint
 - Do not investigate
3. **If the complaint is unlikely to lead to a criminal investigation and does not pose immediate risk of harm*:**
 - consider suspending or terminating the placement (this should not be an automatic response but should be discussed and agreed on a case by case basis) and report the complaint to the relevant LADO within 1 day.
 - Inform the candidate that a complaint has been made, but do not disclose details.
 - Request a written report from the candidate, which will be shared with the client and the LADO.
 - Await instructions from the LADO

***if in any doubt about whether the incident meets the threshold – do not inform the candidate of the details of the complaint until the LADOs has provided guidance**

C: If a concern is raised by a candidate about a colleague:

1. Record the factual details of the complaint
2. Inform the Branch Manager and DSO
3. **If the complaint is about a colleague at a placement school** – inform the relevant client contact and they will investigate.
4. **If the complaint is about another candidate** – inform the relevant client contact and consider suspending or terminating their current placement if they have one. Follow the steps in section 'B'

Suitability Concerns:

GSL Education undertake checks with the DBS and Teacher Regulation Agency for all Teaching and Support Staff, prior to their engagement with schools and then yearly. If we receive subsequent information or evidence that a candidate may have become unsuitable for work, we will take appropriate action.

If you have any reason to believe that you or anyone else may not be suitable to work in schools or as a tutor, you must report your concern to your Consultant, Branch Manager or DSO. This could be due to:

- Expired qualification documents
- Expired right to work
- New criminal convictions
- Current investigations
- Behaviour deemed inappropriate
- Information provided to us by third parties such as the police, DBS or TRA

Next Steps:

1. Consultant receives information or evidence that a candidate has become unsuitable
2. Inform Branch Manager and DSO (if neither are available – inform another Branch Manager)
3. Follow instructions from Branch Manager and DSO
4. If information/evidence are confirmed, the client and candidate will be informed immediately, and the placement will be terminated. (see below ***Policy Statement for Candidates who become unsuitable***)
5. Where appropriate necessary documentation will be updated to reinstate suitability
6. Where appropriate reports will be made by the DSO to the relevant LADO, TRA, DBS, DfE

For more information on the procedures followed by the TRA see: [Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession](#)

For more information on when and how to make a referral to DBS visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs>

**Prohibition Orders*

'A prohibition order means that the person concerned is not allowed to undertake unsupervised teaching work in schools or the other listed settings. Where an individual is prohibited, their details will appear on the Prohibited List. A prohibition order is likely to be appropriate when the behaviour of the person concerned has been fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher. The primary purpose of a prohibition order is to protect pupils, maintain public confidence in the teaching profession and uphold proper standards of conduct, referred to as public interest. A prohibition order is a lifetime ban, though in some circumstances the teacher may be able to make a request to have it reviewed after a specified period of time.' For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/teaching-regulation-agency>

Policy Statement for Candidates who become unsuitable

GSL Education has a responsibility to act if a candidate becomes unsuitable for employment whilst on placement.

If we receive or obtain information which indicates that a candidate is no longer suitable for their current position, we will immediately:

- undertake relevant investigation
- inform the client of the new information and the investigations that are taking place
- if necessary, end the placement
- take all reasonable steps to offer a suitable replacement candidate

Unsuitability of Permanent Candidates

If, within three months from the date of introduction of a candidate to a client (i.e. the date the candidate starts working for the client) we receive or obtain information which indicates that the candidate is or may be unsuitable for that position, we will inform the client without delay (i.e. on the same day, or the next business day if that is not reasonably practicable). For example: if we take up a reference or otherwise hear of information that would make the candidate unsuitable, we will inform the client.

If necessary, we will end the placement and take all reasonable steps to offer a suitable replacement.

Unsuitability of Temporary Candidates

Where we receive or obtain information during the course of a placement that gives us reasonable grounds to believe that a candidate supplied to a client is unsuitable (see above) we will inform the client without delay and end the placement.

If the information only indicates that the candidate may be unsuitable but is insufficient to give us reasonable grounds to believe that s/he is in fact unsuitable; we will commence such enquiries as are reasonably practicable and inform the client of the information received and the enquiries being made. If, as a result of those enquiries, we have reasonable grounds to believe s/he is unsuitable, we will then without delay inform the client and end the placement.

We will take all reasonable steps to offer a suitable replacement.

Unsuitability and the Data Protection Act

The sort of information that might indicate a candidate is unsuitable will depend on the circumstances but may be: a relevant criminal conviction that should have been disclosed; qualifications found to be false; or a medical condition that means the candidate may either be at risk by performing the work or s/he may be placing others at risk. It should be information that would mean we would not have put the candidate forward in the first place and must be more than hearsay.

It is likely that processing of data to comply with regulation 20 will have a lawful basis under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Article 6 of the GDPR sets out that processing will be lawful based on 6 possible bases, including where it is “necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject” and where it is “necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or a third party” (although there are exceptions to the latter of these).

It is likely that as we are processing the data to comply with the Conduct Regulations this will be a sufficient legal obligation, but there is also a point to be made that the processing of this data is in our client’s legitimate interest, as it will affect their engagement of the individual.

However, we will be careful to check the accuracy of any information we receive as the communication of any false or misleading information prejudicial to the candidate could give rise to a possible claim for damages for defamation. We will therefore ensure that if this situation does arise, that we will not disclose more information to the client than is necessary. It may be sufficient where we have supplied a temporary candidate to simply state that “the candidate is being withdrawn pending” investigations into their suitability without stating what the allegations are.

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Team

Director with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection:

Steve Bryce

Email: steve.bryce@gsleducation.com

Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Sarah Andrews

Email: sarah.andrews@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0203 8730 565

Local Safeguarding Contacts:

See below for the weblinks for your Local Authority Safeguarding contacts

Hull: [Hull Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#)

Kent: [KELSI Safeguarding Contacts](#)

Leicester: [Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

London: [Hackney Safeguarding Education](#)

Manchester: [Manchester Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Newcastle: [Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board](#)

Watford: [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Branch Managers (Trained in Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding and Child Protection)

Hull:

Kerry Fowler

Email: Kerry.fowler@gsleducation.com

Tel: 01482 739 633

Kent:

Louise Latter

Email: louise.latter@gsleducation.com

Tel: 01227 937181

Leicester:

Judith Barker

Email: Judith.barker@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0116 478 8000

London:

Ryan Jordan

Email: ryan.jordan@gsleducation.com

Tel: 020 7739 2211

Manchester:

Alison Wellman

Email: alison.wellman@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0161 537 6500

Newcastle:

Sarah Elliott

Email: sarah.elliott@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0191 933 7888

Plymouth:

Alex Hitchens

Email: alex.hitchens@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0175 242 9845

South Yorkshire:

Mitch Stringer

Email: mitch.stringer@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0114 399 3815

Watford:

Moynul Islam

Email: moynul.islam@gsleducation.com

Tel: 0192 395 4070

Education Consultants (First Point of Contact for Candidates and Clients)

(See website www.gsleducation.com/cm/about-gsl/gsl-family)