

# Ocean City College Ltd

## COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Ocean City College Ltd is committed to providing a quality service, and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our customers and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- Resolve informal concerns quickly;
- Keep matters low-key;
- Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

**Definition:** Ocean City College Ltd defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction (with Ocean City College Ltd, with a member of staff, or with a Ocean City College Ltd Trustee) that relates to Ocean City College Ltd and that requires a formal response'.

**Purpose:** The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

**Ocean City College Ltds responsibility will be to:**

## Ocean City College Ltd

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- Respond within a stated period of time;
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- Take action where appropriate.

### **A complainant's responsibility is to:**

- Bring their complaint, in writing, to Ocean City College Ltd's attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- Raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in Ocean City College Ltd;
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- Allow Ocean City College Ltd a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Ocean City College Ltd's control.

**Responsibility for Action:** All Staff, and Trustees of Ocean City College Ltd.

**Confidentiality:** Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Ocean City College Ltd maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Trustees of Ocean City College Ltd will receive annually a report of complaints made and their resolution.

### **Formal Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage 1**

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff who dealt with you, or their manager, so that he or she has a chance to put things right. If your complaint concerns a Trustee of Ocean City College Ltd, rather than a member of Ocean City College Ltd's staff, you should write formally to the individual concerned. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days. If you are unsure which member of Ocean City College Ltd staff to write to, your complaint should be sent to the Manager of Ocean City College Ltd Brian Weatherston.

## Ocean City College Ltd

Our contact details are as follows: Ocean City College Ltd, 30 Ham Drive, Plymouth. PL2 2NL.

Tel No: 01752 559426

### Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to Ocean City College Ltd's personnel officer, and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the personnel officer to acknowledge your request within 4 working days of receipt and a response within 15 working days.

Ocean City College Ltd's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

### Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from Ocean City College Ltd, then you have the option of writing to the Chair of Ocean City College Ltd, 30 Ham Drive, North Prospect, Plymouth. Devon. PL2 2NL, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from Ocean City College Ltd's Manager.

The Chair of Ocean City College Ltd (or their nominee) will respond normally within 10 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

**Note.** If your original complaint was against the Chair of Ocean City College Ltd then the final stage will be handled by the Vice Chair of Ocean City College Ltd.