

# **Reflect On Academy Various Policies for Website**

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## Concerns & Complaints Procedures

### Statement

There may be times when we get things wrong or make a mistake on this course. If you are feeling dissatisfied, we would like to know about it before it grows into something bigger and harder to address. We will regularly seek your views when we evaluate your learning experience. If you feel dissatisfied at any other time you need to let your tutor know. Very often they will be able to help you or, if they cannot, will direct you to someone who can.

### Basic Principles

The Reflect On Academy Concerns & Complaints Procedure is designed to allow learners to resolve issues surrounding all aspects of their course and surrounding other learners in a clear, equitable, and timely manner. It is also designed to allow Reflect On Academy to resolve issues surrounding learners in a similar manner.

In line with BACP requirements, the College operates a multi-step complaints process, and where there is a potential dual role or conflict of interest, an independent complaints consultant will be asked to review and adjudicate at the final stage of the process.

The following Basic Principles of the Procedure should be borne in mind:

1. With the exception of a complaint of abuse all concerns and complaints should, where possible, be resolved through an informal process of discussion. Informal discussion is entirely appropriate for the profession of counselling and allows all sides the chance to resolve issues in a satisfactory manner. For this reason, it is compulsory for concerns and complaints to be addressed via informal discussion before Reflect On Academy will accept a formal, written complaint. The procedures for this are set out below.
2. Complainants are expected to address their own anxieties, issues and transference in advance of expressing a concern or making a complaint and to honour this procedure as a potential part of their therapeutic development.
3. Reflect On Academy may terminate the complaints procedure if the complainant is hostile or discourteous towards staff.
4. Issues of refund policy and amounts are dealt with in the Personal Training Agreement and are not subject to these procedures.
5. Learners are contractually bound to honour this procedure and any complainant not doing so will be dismissed.
6. Complaints must be made individually and under no circumstances by groups of learners or by a learner claiming to act "on behalf of" other learners.
7. All complaints are strictly confidential between the complainant and Reflect On Academy except where a formal written complaint is made about a third party (e.g. a tutor or fellow learner) the third party has the right to view the complaint and to

respond. Any learner aware of a breach of said confidentiality must notify Reflect On Academy.

8. Complaints must be started within seven days of the concern first occurring or they will not be heard.
9. Learners are legally and contractually bound to follow these procedures before taking any further action.

Where there is a possible dual role or conflict of interest (for example, where the complaint concerns a senior staff member who is also a supervisor, tutor or therapist to the complainant), the College will ensure that the matter is considered by someone independent of that role, including, at the final stage, an external independent complaints consultant

### THE PROCEDURE FOR LEARNERS

1. (a) If you have a concern or complaint, first address this orally to your tutor in the hope of achieving a resolution of the concern, within seven days of the issue arising. You are advised to arrange a time to telephone them outside of class in order to resolve the issue, and to ensure that you cover all the points that you wish to. At the end of the conversation, your tutor will ask you if you feel that the matter has been resolved and you should indicate accordingly. If your tutor is unable to resolve your complaint, they will direct you to someone who can. The tutors have been asked to listen to complaints and ensure that you receive the attention you need.
1. (b) If your complaint is about your tutor, or you feel that your tutor will be unable to help with your complaint, you should proceed with (2) below.

You should note that your tutor cannot respond to complaints in writing.

2. If step 1 does not resolve your complaint, or 1(b) applies, please call the Learner Support on 0778 7172968. If no-one answers you will be able to leave a message and should do so. Your call will normally be returned within one working day.

A telephone conversation will then be arranged in which you can raise your concerns and Reflect On Academy will attempt to address these. You will be asked at the end of the conversation if the matter has been resolved and you should indicate accordingly.

3. If for whatever reason your complaint cannot be resolved you will be encouraged to put your complaint in writing so that we understand exactly what is left to be resolved and can select a member of the tutor team, or someone external to the team as appropriate, to provide further investigation and suggest if Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the form of mediation is an option. If mediation is agreed to be a useful way forward it will be arranged in a timely manner. If either party are not happy about ADR, then a formal complaint procedure will be followed.

- (a). Your written complaint will be copied to all parties relevant to the complaint to allow them right of reply.

4. Only if you have followed steps 1-3 and you are still dissatisfied, you may make an external appeal to the primary accrediting body relevant to your course (if the course is accredited) or the Validating Awarding Body. Reflect On Academy will provide you with the relevant details. Once an external appeal commences, no further correspondence can occur direct between Reflect On Academy and the complainant. Reflect On Academy will be bound by the decision of the primary accrediting body.

N.B. Complaints falling outside of this procedure breach your contract with Reflect On Academy.

#### THE PROCEDURE (FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT LEARNERS)

1. Your tutor, or any Reflect On Academy member of staff, may ask to speak with you to informally raise a complaint or concern.
2. If the complaint or concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of Reflect On Academy by step 1 (or you are unobtainable), the Course Co-ordinator or designated officer will write to you outlining the points of concern or complaint. You will be required to respond in writing within seven days. At its discretion, at any time during this procedure Reflect On Academy may suspend your studies.
  - (a) if the concern or complaint has been raised by another learner, or by your tutor or a third party, the procedure will commence at Step 2 and the learner's, tutor's or third party's written complaint will be forwarded to you for response.
3. After your response, or in the case of non-response, within seven days, the Course Coordinator or designated officer will write to you outlining the remedy Reflect On Academy feels appropriate to your situation together with a formal ruling. You must either accept or reject this ruling in writing within seven days.
4. If you accept the remedy, the procedure has reached a satisfactory conclusion. If you do not respond, your studies will be suspended. If you disagree, you should go to step 5.
5. Within seven days, write a letter headed "Appeal to Ruling" to the Principal itemising your concerns.
6. Within 28 days, the Principal will respond in writing in response to your Appeal and will either uphold or overturn the Ruling. Where there is a potential dual role or conflict of interest, the Principal will refer the matter to an independent complaints consultant, who will review the case and advise on the final outcome.
7. The decision of the Principal, informed by the independent complaints consultant where required, shall be final within the College's internal procedures.

## EXCEPTIONS – ABUSE, PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT & HEALTH AND SAFETY, REASONABLE TIME DELAYS

If you wish to make a complaint of abuse, you should commence your complaint at step 3.

If Reflect On Academy utilises its procedures related to an accusation of abuse or professional misconduct, or in the interests of health and safety, it will commence said procedures at step 2.

Should any member of Reflect On Academy staff relevant to this procedure be on holiday or on sick leave then this procedure may be subject to reasonable delay, of which all parties shall be given due notice.

The outcome of all complaints and investigations will be reported in confidence to the College Leadership Team and in writing to the complainant. The Executive Office will keep a log of all complaints received. These will be analysed and presented regularly to the Leadership Team as part of the evaluation of the course.

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### Purpose of the Policy

Reflect On Academy is committed to the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion and has embraced the FREDIE principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement.

The College has due regard for its responsibilities under the Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010). Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as an integral part of decision-making. We are committed to ensuring that there are equal and fair opportunities for all staff and students to succeed.

### Equality Opportunities Statement of Intent

Reflect on Academy recognises that diversity, equality, and inclusion are concepts that should underpin all aspects of the academy. This brings significant benefits to all staff and students, enabling the creation of learning experiences enriched by different life experiences, varied perspectives, flexibility, and creativity.

It is the Reflect On Academy's policy to accept and celebrate diversity; any form of intolerance is counterproductive and unacceptable. Reflect On Academy is therefore committed to building an environment where:

- All students and staff are treated with dignity and respect.
- Diversity is valued.
- Stereotypes are questioned.
- Bias, bigotry, prejudice, and racism are wholeheartedly rejected.

Equality and diversity are at the heart of our vision and are reflected in our four values:

- Integrity
- Excellence
- Equality
- Acceptance and Respect

### Aims of Equality Duty

- a Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- b Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- c Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

### Equality and Diversity Statement

Our goal is for all our students to succeed, and we will provide them with the resources they need to do so. We will work to ensure that our students value the diversity of others, and we will actively promote good student relations.

Reflect On Academy is committed to providing high-quality education and training that reflect best practises in equality and diversity.

Reflect On Academy will be a vibrant college, inspiring all our students to fulfil their dreams and ambitions. Our outstanding training will contribute to a prosperous and cohesive community.

The college encourages active participation from all segments of the community and will work to provide learning opportunities that accommodate diversity while also raising students' and staff's aspirations and achievements.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our workforce and to meeting the different needs of our students. We aim to provide an environment in which everyone, regardless of their background and identity, can study and work to the best of their ability.

### Code of Practice

1. Reflect On Academy is committed to actively oppose oppression and discrimination in all areas of our work, and in relation to trainees, staff, committee members, outside trainers/facilitators and other organisations with whom we work.
2. Reflect On Academy will work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and fully supports its aims and protections.
3. We will take seriously our duty not to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

4. All policies and practices associated with Reflect On Academy, both in its role as an employer and provider of training must be applied with strict observance of (2) above.
5. Reflect On Academy criteria, policies and procedures for trainees, trainers and staff will be monitored and reviewed at least annually.
6. In offering training or employment or in its general dealings, Reflect On Academy will ensure that all individuals are treated with fairness and in line with equal opportunities policy and practice.
7. We will seek to ensure that any outside trainer/facilitator used by Reflect On Academy works within equal opportunities guidelines and we will take seriously any accusation of discrimination by them towards trainees.
8. Discriminatory acts or breaches of the equal opportunities policy by staff will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.
9. Trainees, applicants, members, and staff who feel they have been discriminated against should use the complaints procedure.
10. Responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy lies with the Course Director, who will monitor, review and report annually, making recommendations for improvements where necessary. The College will monitor and review its policy and practice on equal opportunities annually They will report annually to the course director and make suggestions for changes as necessary to continue promotion of equal opportunities in all areas of ROA.

## Procedures

The College Grievance and Complaints procedures are the appropriate means for raising concerns about equality and diversity, and an investigation will be conducted if staff or learners are alleged to be in breach of the policy.

ROA will: ensure staff training and development in equality and diversity is provided; monitor and review the curriculum; ensure marketing reflects good practice; promote the Equality and Diversity Policy; review the effectiveness of policies and procedures; and publicise the policy to all sections of the community.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEHAVIOURS

Employees have a responsibility to promote equality and diversity in all aspects of their work.

### Director Quality of Education

Director is responsible for providing a strategic lead and direction to ensure all learners and staff are enabled to achieve their full potential, and that ROA College is seen as a beacon of excellence.

### Senior Management Team

Admissions criteria must not discriminate against or exclude any individual or group of learners, staff are aware of equality and diversity policy, plans for new courses and curriculum development take account of equal and diversity policy requirements, equality and diversity issues are covered in quality reviews and self-assessment, data should be used to monitor learner performance, set equal opportunity related targets,

disseminate good practice, promote equality and diversity in staff appraisal, and promote diversity issues through staff development.

Course Managers

Admissions criteria must not exclude any individual or group of learners, monitor data to address any issues of under-representation or under-performance, ensure learners are aware of their rights, take appropriate action in the event of harassment, bullying, or discrimination, be aware of learners' personal circumstances and difficulties, provide guidance and referrals to additional support services, and address equality and diversity issues in course self-assessment and development plans, staff appraisal, and staff development.

Tutors/Lecturers and Learning Support Staff are required to

Provide high expectations of all learners, ensure curriculum materials do not exclude any individual or group of learners, use teaching materials, content and methods that take into account diverse learning needs, styles and preferences, enable learners to question and test received wisdom, create a classroom ethos and learning environment that is inclusive, provide guidance and referrals to additional support services, adopt marking policies and assessment methods that treat all learners impartially, take appropriate and immediate action in the event of harassment, victimisation or discrimination, and address any issues of stereotypical attitudes and prejudiced thinking.

Business and Support Managers

Are required to ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed. Staff must ensure equality and diversity issues are addressed in quality reviews, recruitment, training, promotion, appraisal, and development.

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

### **Introduction**

Safeguarding is the responsibility that Reflect On has to ensure that their employees, students and volunteers, partners, vendors, operations and programmes do no harm to children, young people or adults at risk (together referred to as ‘vulnerable people’ under this policy); that they do not expose them to the risk of discrimination, neglect, harm and abuse; and that any concerns the organisation has about the safety of vulnerable people within the communities in which they work, are dealt with and reported to the appropriate authorities. It is also the responsibility that the organisation has for protecting its employees and volunteers when they are vulnerable, for example, when ill or at risk of harm or abuse.

Child protection is a central part of but not separate to safeguarding. It is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering or at risk of significant harm because of abuse or programme of work. It also includes measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse.

Over recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the way in which children, young people, and adults at risk of discrimination, neglect, abuse and exploitation by those who are in positions of trust and power over them, including through international development activities. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in the efforts made by development organisations to ensure that no harm results from the contact their employees, volunteers and other representatives have with their target populations or communities.

Through their work, Reflect On employees, volunteers and students may engage with young people and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly. Reflect On recognises it has an obligation to put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and protection of children, young people and adults at risk, including those with whom we work and those in the communities where Reflect On work is undertaken.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to provide clarity to ALL on how they should engage with children, young people and adults at risk when working for, on behalf of, or in partnership with Reflect On. It is also to help us make sure that employees, volunteers, and other representatives are protected. It is intended to help us to have a common understanding of safeguarding issues, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which we operate and thereby increase accountability in this crucial aspect of our work.

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter, which may result in immediate termination of employment or contract, withdrawal of volunteer status, withdrawal of student status and could result in the person in breach of the policy being

## Definitions

Abuse - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take the form of physical, psychological, financial, or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child, young person or adult at risk. Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts and can be unintentional or deliberate. Abuse often involves criminal acts.

Discriminatory abuse – abuse motivated by a vulnerable person's age, race, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristic.

Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of his/her health or development. Examples include failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failure to protect them from physical or psychological harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable person's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse – includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Psychological abuse - includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. Examples include not giving a vulnerable person opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a vulnerable person, which may include interactions that are beyond a vulnerable person's developmental capability. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), or the exploitation or corruption of a vulnerable person.

Sexual abuse - involves forcing, enticing or coercing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and

touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving a vulnerable person in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be carried out by adults or other children.

Child – Reflect On regards a child as anyone under the age of 18 years, irrespective of the age of majority in the country in which the child lives or in their home country. It is widely recognised that children are generally more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation due to factors such as age, gender, social and economic status, developmental stage, and dependence on others.

Vulnerable person/people – for the purposes of this policy this is an umbrella term which covers children, young people, and adults at risk.

Adults at risk - a person, 18 years and above, who by reason of disability, age, gender, social and economic status, or illness, the context they are in, may be unable to take care of or to protect him or herself against abuse, harm, or exploitation.

Youth or young people - individuals aged 15 to 25 (15 to 35 in some countries) – Reflect On recognises that this group spans the categories of ‘children and ‘adults’ but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.

## Policy Statement

Reflect On has zero tolerance against abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people. Reflect On also recognises that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people with whom we work and those in the communities in which we live.

Reflect On works to the following key principles to protect vulnerable people:

- Everyone has an equal right to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or having a child, gender reassignment, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- The best interests of the vulnerable person are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision making.
- Reflect On will take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care towards vulnerable people, and take action where we believe that a child, young person or adult at risk or is actually harmed.
- When working with or through partners or sub contracted agencies, Reflect On will ensure that their safeguarding procedures are consistent and in line with the principles and approaches set out in this policy.
- Reflect On respects confidentiality and has a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data. Information should only be shared and handled on a need to know

basis, that is, access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties. Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information are allowed to receive it.

- Reflect On commits to monitoring the implementation of the safeguarding policy. This policy will be reviewed every three years and earlier if necessary.

## Responsibilities

All employees, volunteers, students, sub-contractors, partner organisations and visitors are obliged to follow this policy and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse, and which encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

All people working with Reflect On will:

- Read, understand, and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy
- Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse in all working environments.
- Place the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable people above all other considerations.
- Report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child or vulnerable person
- Report any concerns they may have about the behaviour of a Reflect On representative in relation to safeguarding.
- In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the contact is taking place and why.

All people working with Reflect On will not:

- Sexually harass, assault or abuse another person
- Physically harass, assault or abuse another person
- Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate,
- belittle or degrade
- Condone, or participate in behaviour which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe
- Develop, encourage or fail to take action of relationships with children or other vulnerable people which could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Agree with a child to keep a secret which has implications for their safety or the safety of other young people.

Recruitment and Selection:

- Where an employee, volunteer or student is engaged in 'regulated activity' (direct work with vulnerable individuals), an enhanced DBS check will be undertaken.

Data Protection

- Ensure that personal information is kept confidential unless we have the agreement of the individual and/or their parent/guardian, except where it is necessary to pass this to a specialised child welfare or law enforcement agency in relation to a safeguarding incident

### Minimum Standards

Where employees or volunteers are contracted by other employers, or when working with partners, sub contracted agencies, Reflect On will brief them on our safeguarding policy and ask for information on how the organisation works to protect vulnerable people and ensure that they meet our Safeguarding Standards.

### Raising and responding to concerns

Reflect On places a mandatory obligation on all employees, students, volunteers, contractors and partners to report concerns, suspicions, allegations and incidents which indicate actual or potential abuse or exploitation vulnerable people or which suggests this policy may have in any other way been breached. It is not the responsibility of the employees or student to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, however, concerns should be raised with the director of counselling of course tutor, who will initiate the procedure for dealing with suspected or actual incidents of abuse.

### Pathway for reporting concerns

The course director and course tutors are responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedure is followed so that suspected or actual cases of abuse are responded to appropriately and consistently and referred to the relevant statutory authority.

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively:

- Reports must be made, and decisions and actions taken
- Reflect On is not an investigative authority. It is essential that referrals are made to the relevant law enforcement agency to ensure that appropriate protection and support is given to the vulnerable individual, and that any evidence is collected in accordance with the law.
- All sensitive and personal data must be kept confidential (including the names of anyone who makes a report of abuse), and be shared on a strictly 'need to know basis', that is, access must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties.
- Where a Reflect On employee or student is the subject of an investigation, the Course director will lead the case.

