



**Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust
(DoWMAT)**

Management of Complaints to the MAT

MAT Board Approval:	July 2017
Review Date:	Summer 2019
Member of staff responsible:	Mrs Karen Surrall

DoWMAT Vision

The Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust (DoWMAT) will, through its mission statement 'to love, to learn, to serve', enable all its academies to flourish so that all stakeholders can 'live life in all its fullness'. (John 10:10)

DoWMAT Aims

To Love:

- For pupils to grow and learn in schools where, as children of God, their individual qualities are nurtured, to give them fulfilment, self-worth, the skills to contribute to society and confidence in the future
- For staff, accorded dignity and respect, to be enabled to become the very best practitioners that they can be, inspiring, sharing a joy for learning and aspiration
- For academies to be hospitable to diversity, to become the centre of their communities as places of nurture and beacons of educational excellence
- For all learning to be centred in relationships based upon compassion, generosity, truth-telling, forgiveness and reconciliation

To Learn:

- For academies to be resourced and supported so that all pupils within the DoWMAT are enabled to flourish, reaching their potential whatever their starting points
- To ensure staff and governors access high quality professional development so that standards of teaching and learning are excellent
- For academic rigour to be set in the context of rich curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for learning
- For academies to be places where explicit Christian values, collective worship, religious education and opportunities for reflection nurture the spiritual and moral growth of pupils and staff

To Serve:

- To fulfil the wider vision of the Church of England, serving our communities through the work of local academies
- To ensure academies are places of safety for pupils and staff where needs are met with dignity and respect
- To offer help and advice to those who lead our academies at all levels so that they are well equipped to face the challenges ahead
- To ensure that members, directors and trust staff understand the pressures and challenges of education in the 21st century ensuring that those leading and teaching in our academies are resourced and supported

Where the academy-based complaints procedures have been completed and the complainant does not feel their complaint has been dealt with to their satisfaction by the academy they may contact the Multi Academy Trust in writing to request a review of the complaint investigation.

Generally, the Multi Academy Trust will only look into complaints about academies that fall into the following two areas.

a) The academy did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering a complaint or the academy's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements.

The Multi Academy Trust cannot review or overturn an academy's decisions about complaints but will look at whether the academy considered the complaint appropriately. The Multi Academy Trust will generally only do this after a complaint has been through the academy's own procedure but may investigate sooner if there is evidence of undue delays by the academy. If the Multi Academy Trust finds that an academy did not deal with a complaint appropriately it will request that the complaint is reconsidered. Similarly, if the academy's complaints procedure does not meet statutory requirements then the Multi Academy Trust will ensure this is put right.

b) The academy has failed to comply with a duty imposed under its funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

The Multi Academy Trust will seek to resolve any concerns regarding potential or actual breaches of the funding agreement with the academy. The Multi Academy Trust will also consider evidence that an academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation placed on it.

Investigations will not usually take place 12 months or more after the decisions or action taken by the academy unless the complainant has good reason for the delay in making the complaint.

The Multi Academy Trust reserves the right not to investigate complaints considered to be vexatious or malicious or where the Multi Academy Trust is satisfied with the action that the academy has already taken or proposes to take to resolve the complaint.

Procedures for Dealing with a complaint

1. Written complaints will be acknowledged in writing within **5 academy days**. The complainant will be given the name of the Investigating Officer at the Multi Academy Trust.
2. The complainant will be asked to submit a written summary of the complaint.
3. The academy will be asked to provide:
 - a copy of its complaints procedures and details of any other relevant policies or procedures;
 - an explanation of how each stage of its complaints procedures has been followed;

- a response to the summary of the complaint, together with relevant documents and copies of correspondence with the complainant.

4. The academy will be asked to respond within 10 academy days, notifying the Investigating Officer if there is any confidential information which may not be shared with the complainant such as data belonging to individuals not involved in the complaint.

5. The Investigating Officer will respond in writing to the complainant, usually within **15 academy days**. However, whilst every effort will be made to complete investigations promptly, in some cases requiring detailed investigations, it will take longer to produce a written response. Where this is the case the complainant will be advised of any revised timescale for production of the written response.

6. Where appropriate the Multi Academy Trust may direct the academy to review its decision on the complaint submitted to it or change its procedures for reaching the decision if they are non-compliant with statutory requirements

The Role of the Education Funding Agency

1. If the complainant still continues to be dissatisfied after the matter has been considered by the Multi Academy Trust, they may refer the matter to the Education Funding Agency via an online complaints form at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

2. The Education Funding Agency will ensure that the complaint has been dealt with properly by the academy and will consider complaints about the academies that fall into any of the following three areas:

- Where there is an undue delay or the academy did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering the complaint
- Where the academy is in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State
- Where an academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

3. The EFA will not overturn an academies decision about a complaint. However if the EFA find an academy did not deal with a complaint properly they may request that the complaint is looked at again and procedures are changed to meet the requirements set out in the Regulations.