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1 - Scope and Purpose

1.1 This policy relates to all students of MetFilm School (the School). The School has a firm commitment to equality and diversity and will not tolerate the harassment or bullying of one member of its community by another or others.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to promote the development of a working and learning environment in which harassment and bullying are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to complain about harassment and bullying, should they arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with appropriately and fairly.

1.3 The policy outlines procedures to be followed if a student feels they are being harassed or bullied during their period of study at the School.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following MetFilm School policies:

1.4.1 Student Code of Conduct

1.4.2 Student Disciplinary Policy

2. MetFilm School's Commitment

2.1 MetFilm School, as part of its commitment to equality and diversity, believes that every student has a right to work and study in an environment which encourages harmonious relationships. The School is committed to preventing harassment and bullying and its commitment to equal opportunity is enshrined in the principles on which it was founded.

2.2 Every student is also personally liable under the Equality Act 2010 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. Allegations of harassment and bullying will be treated very seriously by the School and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator.

2.3 The School will ensure that any student raising a genuine concern under this policy is not victimised as a result.

2.4 As allegations of harassment and bullying are very serious, the School will also treat very seriously any such allegations proven to be malicious and these are also likely to be the subject of disciplinary action.

3. Harassment and Bullying: Definitions

3.1 Harassment and bullying can take a variety of different forms, ranging from repeatedly ignoring a person or subjecting them to unwelcome attention, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule or offence. This includes via the use of social media platforms. More extreme forms of harassment and bullying include physical threats or violence.

3.2 Behaviour that may appear trivial as a single incident can constitute harassment or bullying when repeated, or in the context of the staff/student relationship. Harassment and bullying may not always be intentional but are always unacceptable, whether intentional or not.

3.3 Some of the most prevalent forms of harassment and bullying include the following:

Sexual harassment can take the form of ridicule, sexually provocative remarks or jokes, offensive comments about dress or appearance, the display or distribution of sexually explicit material, unwelcome sexual advances or physical contact, demands for sexual favours or assault.

Racial harassment is usually, although not exclusively, directed at people from ethnic minorities. It may include jokes about, or gratuitous references to, a person's colour, race, religion or nationality. It can also include offensive remarks about dress, culture, or customs which have the effect of ridiculing or undermining an individual or fostering hatred and/or prejudice towards individuals or particular groups.

Harassment of people with disabilities can take the form of individuals being ignored, disparaged or ridiculed because of mistaken assumptions about their capabilities. Their disability rather than their ability can become the focus of attention and harassment can include inappropriate personal remarks, jokes or inappropriate reference to an individual's appearance.

Harassment on the grounds of a person's sexuality may be aimed at heterosexuals but is more usually experienced by lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered or queer people (often referred to as the LGBTQ+ community). Examples of harassment relating to sexuality are homophobic remarks or jokes, offensive comments relating to a person's sexuality, threats to disclose a person's sexuality to others or offensive behaviour/abuse relating to HIV or AIDS status. The European Commission code of practice on sexual harassment points out that lesbians and gay men often encounter disproportionate levels of harassment relating to their sexuality. The response of lesbians and gay men to harassment may also be complicated by the fact that in order to complain about it, or confront it, they may have to be open about their sexuality with other people, perhaps for the first time.

Bullying is the exercise of power over another person through negative acts or behaviour that undermines him/her personally and/or academically. Bullying can involve threatening, insulting, abusive, disparaging or intimidating behaviour which places inappropriate pressure on the recipient or has the effect of isolating or excluding them. Bullying can take the form of shouting, sarcasm, derogatory remarks concerning academic performance or constant criticism and undermining. Bullying is to be distinguished from vigorous academic debate or the actions of a teacher or supervisor making reasonable (but perhaps unpopular) requests of his/her students.

3.4 The above list of examples is not exclusive and harassment can also take place which is on the grounds of a person's age, style of dress or any other characteristic that makes them different from the majority or from the person who harasses or bullies them.

3.5 Although the terms 'harassment' and 'bullying' are not synonymous, the guidance in this policy document relates to both issues and the term 'harassment' will be used from this point onwards to encompass both.

4. Harassment: General Principles

4.1 The over-riding principles in dealing with allegations or concerns of harassment are that they must be taken seriously, considered carefully and addressed

speedily and, where possible, in confidence.

- 4.2 Any student who feels that they are the subject of harassment, either by a fellow student, a member of staff or anyone else with whom they come into contact in the course of their period of study at MetFilm School, may wish to make a note of incidents, dates, times and any witnesses, for future reference.
- 4.3 Any student who considers themselves to have been the subject of harassment has the right to be listened to and to be given informed advice on how the matter may be resolved. There are usually a number of options. Anyone who feels they have been harassed is likely to wish to speak to someone with whom they feel they share something in common. For this reason, they should be able to approach one of a number of different people within MetFilm School.

5. How to Report Bullying or Harassment

- 5.1 If a student feels that they are being bullied or harassed they can choose to raise a concern or make a complaint using the School's informal or formal complaints process (see flowchart at Appendix 1 and [MetFilm School Complaints Policy](#)).
- 5.2 Students should raise their concerns with their Tutor, Course Leader, Personal Tutor or a member of the Student Services team. They will provide guidance and advice on the process.
- 5.3 Students are encouraged to use the informal process in the first instance to seek resolution. However, the School recognises that a bullying and harassment complaint may be so complex or serious that informal resolution would be inappropriate, and an immediate formal approach is required.

Informal Process

- 5.4 If a student feels that they are being bullied or harassed, they should raise their concerns with their Tutor, Course Leader, Personal Tutor or a member of the Student Services team. They will provide guidance and advice on how to proceed.
- 5.5 He/she/they will agree a time to discuss and agree a way of addressing them with the student. This may include discussing concerns with the person a student feels are bullying or harassing them.
- 5.6 Should harassment occur in a group situation, the person in authority within the group has the responsibility to recognise harassment when it occurs and to take speedy action to stop it.
- 5.7 It is important that it is made clear to the perpetrator that such behaviour is unacceptable to MetFilm School and will not be tolerated. Silence or inaction can be seen as collusion and endorsement of such behaviour. If the

person in authority within the group is the harasser, others within the group should support the individual being harassed in taking action to report the harassment.

Formal Process

- 5.8 The formal stage of the procedure may be used where a student is not satisfied with informal attempts to resolve their complaint.
- 5.9 This stage may also be used if the complaint is so complex or serious that informal resolution would be inappropriate. The full formal complaints process can be found in the [MetFilm School Complaints Policy](#) and flowchart at Appendix 1.
- 5.10 Students should contact their Course Leader, Deputy Director or a member of the Student Services team for advice and guidance on submitting a formal complaint.
- 5.11 Formal complaints should be made in writing, using the MetFilm School Complaint Form (Appendix 2). The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and an Investigating Officer appointed.
- 5.12 Where it is considered that the student complained about poses a risk to themselves, other students or staff, the School, or the conduct of an investigation the School may suspend the student complained about in line with s.6 of the MetFilm School Student Disciplinary Policy during the investigation period.
- 5.13 The investigation may include requests for interviews, documents and any other evidence relevant to the matter complained of.
- 5.14 Following completion of the investigation, the Investigating Officer will report on their findings and make recommendations for any further action. This may include referring the subject of the complaint into the School Disciplinary process, further mediation and adjustments to the teaching and learning structure (such as group membership, timetable).
- 5.15 The complainant will be consulted on the outcome of the investigation and any recommendations made.

6 - Review Procedure

- 6.1 Per section 6.2.16. of the [MetFilm School Complaints Policy](#), if a student has reason to believe that their complaint has not been handled fairly, objectively or in accordance with the procedures described above, the student may write to the MetFilm School Director (jonny@metfilm.co.uk) **within 10 working days** of the

outcome letter, to request a review of the matter. The student must set out their reasons for requesting the review.

6.2 The MetFilm School Director will review the handling of the complaint in light of the student's written statement and report in writing. The MetFilm School Director may confirm or rescind an earlier decision in light of this report. A written reply will be sent to the student within 25 working days of receiving a request for review of the handling of the complaint.

7 - Counselling & Support

7.1. It is recognised that being the subject of bullying or harassment and making a complaint can be an extremely distressing experience. The School has a responsibility to ensure that its departments, courses and related activities are free from bullying and harassment.

7.2. Students can also seek support from the School's Counselling Service, Student Services team or Personal Tutor, as appropriate. Students may also seek informal support from one of the University of West London Chaplain and Interfaith Advisor.

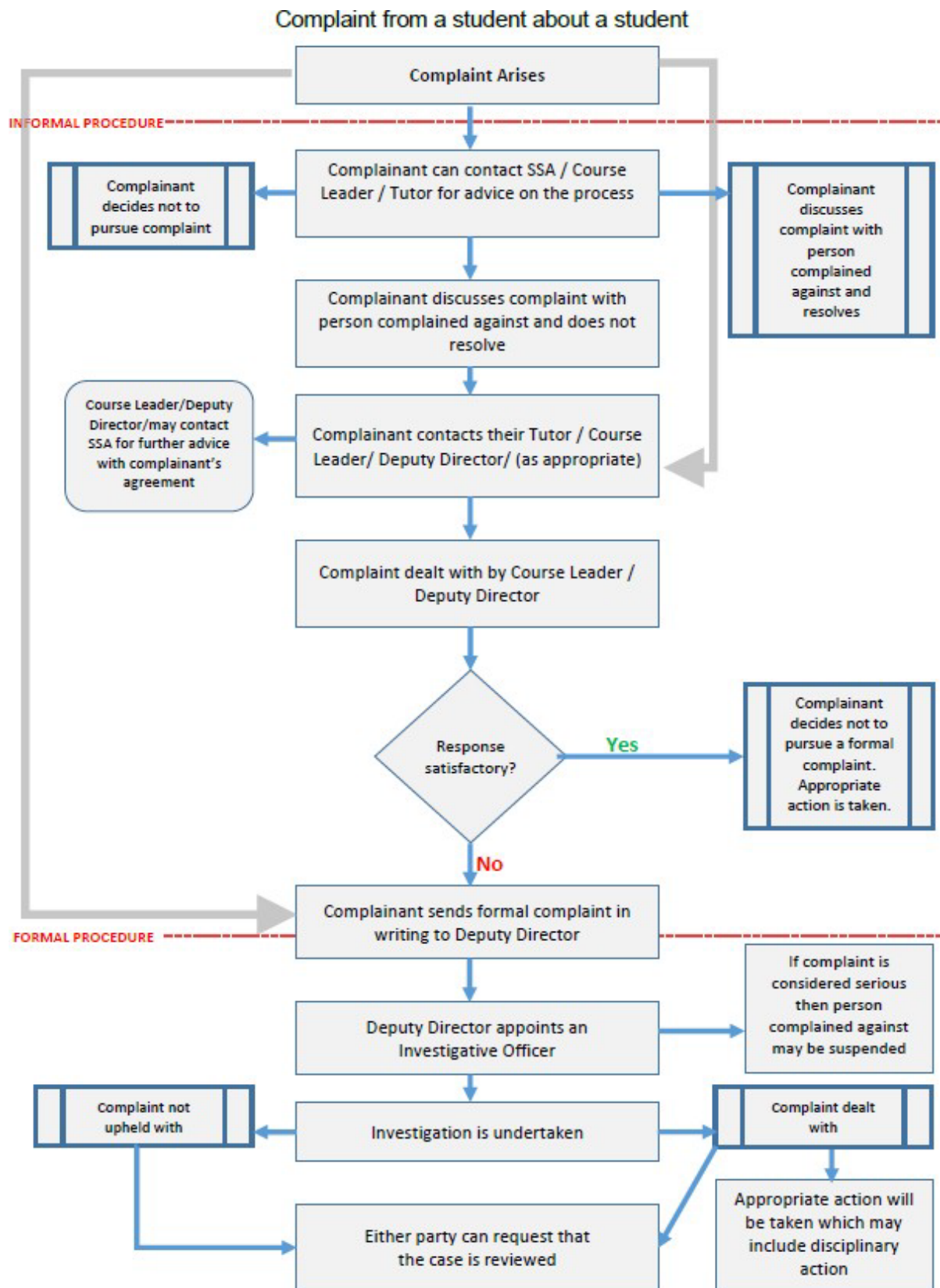
7.3. The same sources of support are available to students for whom a complaint of bullying or harassment has been made against.

8 - Confidentiality

8.1 All complaints (informal or formal) will be treated confidentially. Information shall only be divulged on a need-to-know basis and with the knowledge of the complainant.

8.2 It should be recognised, however, that maintaining anonymity of the complainant may limit the extent to which the procedure can be progressed. There may also be rare occasions when the legal duty of care means that the School is unable to maintain an individual's anonymity, for example where there may be risk to the individual or others.

Appendix 1 – Flow Chart



CONFIDENTIAL

METFILM SCHOOL COMPLAINT FORM

To be eligible to make a complaint under the [Student Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) and Procedure you must be an applicant or currently or recently enrolled as a student with the School.

Where possible, you should attempt to resolve your complaint informally, directly with the Course Team or service that you are complaining about.

If you intend to make a **formal** complaint about the delivery and quality of services received, or about the delivery of teaching provision or any other matters relating to a programme of study, you **must** use this form to put forward your case. You are required to complete all sections. You should expect an acknowledgement within **5 working days** and will be informed of the outcome of your complaint in due course, in line with the timelines outlined in the complaints policy.

This form should be sent to complaints@metfilmschool.ac.uk. Alternatively arrangements can be made for you to hand a hard copy of the complaint form to Student Services (currently located at the Student Hub in A-Block).

If you require wellbeing support or advice/guidance at any point during the complaints process then our Wellbeing Team is available to advise you. You can contact them at wellbeing@metfilmschool.ac.uk to request a meeting.

Please note that all complaints must normally be made within 20 days of the incident about which you are complaining, occurring. Complaint made out of time will be rejected and a Completion of Procedures letter issued.

SECTION A - YOUR DETAILS

First name:

Surname:

Have you ever been known by any other name whilst studying at MetFilm? If yes, please list this name below:

Course of Study:

Student Number:

Preferred email address for complaint contact:

Please note, if the above remains blank we will use the personal email address which we have on our student record system for you.

Date of the incident/issue the complaint relates to (if applicable):

Do you currently have an Individual Support Plan (ISP) set up with the School:
Y/N (*Delete as appropriate*)

SECTION B – NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT

Please outline your complaint in the box below. Include specific examples, and the date(s) of the incident(s) you are referring to. This will help us during the investigation process.

Note that complaints regarding matters of academic judgement are beyond the scope of the complaints process. This includes complaints about the mark received for a particular assignment or module. Such complaints will only be heard in very exceptional circumstances and then through the University of West London (UWL) appeals process. For more information on this process, contact Student Services at admin@metfilmschool.ac.uk

Complaints requesting new services will not be considered, though the feedback might be taken forward informally. Requesting new services that the School does not currently provide or claim to provide, is beyond the scope of the complaints process.

PLEASE LIST ANY DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ATTACHED AND MAKE SURE YOU KEEP A COPY:

We cannot normally consider complaints made without evidence. It is the complainant's responsibility to evidence the allegations they are making. We acknowledge that there are some issues that are harder to evidence than others and will consider whether we can accept the complaint with limited evidence on a case by case basis.

Examples of suitable evidence might include screenshots of misleading information or content that resulted in a complaint, email communications from staff or other similar independent documentary evidence. Where you wish to make a complaint in relation to a policy or procedure that has not been upheld, please indicate clearly which procedure.

SECTION C - AN OUTLINE OF THE ACTION YOU HAVE TAKEN SO FAR

Please outline the steps you have already taken to resolve your complaint **informally**:

Who did you contact about your complaint (*please include the full name of the member of staff or tutor you reached out to*)?:

Describe the outcome of any action taken so far and explain why you believe that the matter has not yet been resolved.

SECTION D - DESIRED OUTCOMES

Please clearly describe the action you would like to see taken in order to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction.

SECTION E - CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT AND NOTES ON DATA PROTECTION

Complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Everyone involved in the procedures for investigating and managing complaints through MetFilm School processes has a duty to maintain confidentiality.

However, for a complaint to be investigated fully and action taken it will be necessary to disclose the complainant's identity to relevant staff within the service which is the subject of the complaint and to others directly involved. See the Student Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy for more detailed information on anonymity and complaints.

Where something is disclosed that could have a safeguarding impact, we reserve the right to liaise with appropriate professionals and we may flag concerns with the Safeguarding lead.

Any confidential third party evidence submitted must be accompanied by written permission from the people named in the documentation. Examples of this might include medical documentation submitted on behalf of someone other than yourself.

Please see the School's [Data Protection Policy](#) for detail on how we keep and store student data and the relevant data protection notices.

SECTION F – WELLBEING AND SUPPORT

If you have a disability or long term health condition, you can request for reasonable adjustments (if not already outlined in an existing Individual Support Plan) to be made in order to support you to engage effectively with the complaints process. Please indicate below if any support is required:

SECTION G – DECLARATION

I believe that the above information is accurate. I confirm that details of this complaint can be passed on to the case handler, relevant investigators if applicable, and relevant staff, in the department or service that is the subject of the complaint.

Signature:

Date: