

# Activate Mentoring Programme - Complaints Procedure

## 1. Scope of Procedure

1.1 Throughout the mentoring partnership, mentors and mentees are encouraged to have regular conversations about whether the partnership is working or whether change is needed. Mentors and mentees who have not been able to informally resolve challenges they are experiencing should first raise concern with the Activate Mentoring Programme Coordinator. Where challenges cannot be resolved, this complaints procedure can be used. There could be occasions where an Activate mentee or mentor wishes to express concern or dissatisfaction with aspects of the Activate mentoring programme.

1.2 This procedure sets out the process by which Activate mentees and Activate mentors can raise concern or complaints about:

- a) the training and support provided
- b) the wider programme of development activities available through the Activate mentoring programme
- c) their mentoring partnership (except where this includes concern about matters listed under 1.3 below)
- d) other aspects of the programme, including its administration.

1.3 This procedure **cannot be used** where an Activate mentee or mentor wishes to raise concern or a complaint which relates to safeguarding, bullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, racial discrimination and harassment, or other issues concerning the Equality Act 2010.

1.4 Where this is the case, Activate mentees and mentors should seek advice from the Head of Strategy and Operations (Graduate School) as to which College procedures they should use to raise a formal concern. Such conversations will be handled in confidence, unless there is a significant and immediate risk to the health and safety of a mentee, mentor or of others. Where this is the case, confidentiality will be broken.

Depending on the situation College procedures which could be used include:

1. The College's Student Complaints Procedure (Ordinance E3)
2. The College's Student Disciplinary Procedures (Ordinance E2)
3. The College's staff Ordinances

Where situations involve alumni, advice will be sought from the Director of Advancement.

## **2. Principles of the Activate Mentoring Programme Complaints Procedure**

- 2.1 Imperial's position is that no student or member of staff should be discriminated against or in any way penalised for raising a complaint and the same principle applies to this procedure.
- 2.2 Where an Activate mentee or mentor believes that they should receive reasonable adjustments to this procedure on the grounds of disability, this should be clearly stated in their submission, including the reasons for requesting the adjustment and suggestions of what this may mean in practice i.e. extended deadlines.
- 2.3 Every effort will be made to ensure complaints and concerns raised through this procedure are handled quickly and efficiently with a view to seeking a positive outcome for all concerned.
- 2.4 All complaints will be handled in confidence unless there is a significant and immediate risk to the health and safety of the mentee, mentor or of others. Where this is the case, the complainant will be informed that confidentiality will be broken.

## **3. The Process**

- 3.1 The Activate Mentoring Programme Complaints Procedure is a "stage one: local resolution" process.
- 3.2 Activate mentees or mentors wishing to make a complaint should raise their concern with the Head of Strategy and Operations (Graduate School), Laura Lane, [l.lane@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:l.lane@imperial.ac.uk). It is recommended that mentees and mentors raise their concern within 15 days of becoming aware of the issue.
- 3.3 The Head of Strategy and Operations (Graduate School) will consider the complaint and aim to provide a written response (via email) within 10 working days. Where appropriate, the response will also be copied to [student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:student.complaints@imperial.ac.uk) to ensure that a record of the response is kept.
- 3.4 The response will report:
- a) how the issue has been considered or to advise the mentee/mentor as to how it will be resolved
  - b) where relevant, inform the mentee/mentor of the next step(s) and timeframes for doing so
  - c) provide the mentee/mentor with information on how to escalate their complaint within the College should they be dissatisfied with the outcome.

3.5 As part of the consideration of the complaint, it may be necessary for the Head of Strategy & Operations (Graduate School) to meet with the mentee/mentor to understand more fully the concern and resolution sought. It may also be necessary for the Head of Strategy & Operations (Graduate School) to meet with other parties referred to in the complaint.

3.6 In order to address the complaint, the Head of Strategy & Operations (Graduate School) may choose one or more of the following options, or something different, depending on the nature of the complaint:

1. Make a change to the mentoring partnership, supporting both parties through this process
2. Offer mediation between the mentee/mentor
3. Make changes to the way in which the Activate mentoring programme is administered
4. At the next appropriate time, make changes to the training and development programme and activities available to mentees/mentors
5. At the next appropriate time, make changes to the criteria for recruiting mentors

#### **4. Raising a complaint with the College\_**

4.1 Should the mentee/mentor remain unsatisfied with the outcome of the Activate Mentoring Programme Complaints Procedure they can escalate their concern within the College via one of the College's formal procedures. The Head of Strategy and Operations (Graduate School) will provide information on which procedures to use as part of the written response to the "stage one local resolution process."

#### **5. Support**

5.1 Activate mentees wishing to make a complaint are advised to seek support from the Imperial College Union Advice Centre. Activate mentees can also seek support from their Departmental Senior Tutor and/or the Faculty Senior Tutors.

5.2 Activate mentors (who are PhD students) wishing to make a complaint are advised to seek support from the Imperial College Union Advice Centre. Activate mentees can also seek support from their Departmental Senior Tutor and/or the Faculty Senior Tutors.

5.3 Activate mentees and mentors are also reminded that the Report and Support tool, allows students to disclose unwelcome behaviours such as bullying, harassment, sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, racial discrimination and more. Reports can be made anonymously through this tool.