

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Student Complaints and Grievance Procedure**

Berlitz College has policies in place for dealing with complaints from students in relation to any matter that may arise during the course of their training program. These policies are documented in the Student Handbook which is issued to all students once they begin their English Language Training with us. In addition, a Student Complaint Form is distributed to students, should they wish to make a complaint on any matter arising during the course of their studies.

A student who feels that he or she is being harassed or bullied, should immediately ask the person harassing them to cease. If they feel that they cannot do so directly, they should contact the Director of Studies immediately for assistance. A note should be kept of the dates of the alleged harassment and witnesses (if any).

Every effort will be made by Berlitz College to resolve the complaint speedily. In accordance with the rules of natural justice, the alleged harasser will be given details of the allegation and an opportunity to reply. In some cases, it may be appropriate and sufficient for the Director of Studies to explain to the person engaging in the harassment that their behaviour is unwelcome.

Where an official, formal complaint is made, a fair and impartial investigation will be conducted by the Director of Studies. Both parties to a complaint will have the right to be represented during all stages of an investigation by a representative of their choice.

Berlitz College views bullying, intimidation and harassment as acts of misconduct. If, after investigation, it appears that the complaint is valid, any necessary action will be taken to stop the bullying, intimidation or harassment immediately and prevent a recurrence. This may include disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning up to and including dismissal. Any malicious complaints will be similarly treated.

As an alternative to disciplinary action, and only in circumstances where it is deemed appropriate and feasible, Berlitz College reserves the right to transfer the alleged offender or the complainant where they specifically request a transfer.

### **Student Complaints Procedure**

The procedure consists of 2 stages.

The first stage is the informal stage and encourages informal resolution. If students are dissatisfied with the class and/or teacher, they are encouraged to approach their teacher to convey and resolve any issues.

Dissatisfaction with administrative or student support services should be brought to the attention of the individuals involved.

In the event that the proposed resolution does not meet the satisfaction of the parties concerned, students should proceed to the second stage whereby they complete the Student Complaint Form which can be found at reception and submit it to the relevant department manager. In the case of academic dissatisfaction, the Director of Studies will respond to the complaint within 10 working days, either via email or meeting the student concerned, depending on the seriousness of the complaint.

The response outlines what action has been taken or is being proposed to resolve the complaint. In the event that the complaint has not been upheld, the reason for that decision is outlined clearly. Similarly, the Academic Director will take the same steps when dealing with a complaint related to administrative or student welfare services. All documentation relating to student complaints and resolution of student complaints will be kept in hard copy student files.

In the case that a student is dissatisfied with their teacher, the Director of Studies will hold a meeting with the teacher and discuss the issues which have been raised. The Director of Studies may decide to schedule an observation in order to resolve the problem. In the event of a serious complaint, the Director of Studies may take the course of action to replace the teacher.

### **Accommodation Complaints**

Berlitz College ensures that the best service possible is given to students at all times. When disputes/complaints arise with regard to accommodation, the following action is taken:

If a student arrives at a host family and expresses immediate dissatisfaction with the accommodation, the College will immediately move the student to a different host family and an investigation will take place as to what the problem is and what corrective action can be taken. If the problem is of a minor nature, the issue will be resolved immediately, if possible. If the problem is a major issue, the Student Welfare Officer will attempt to solve the problem as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of the student.

If a host family expresses dissatisfaction with the student, then the student will be relocated to an alternative family. Again, minor issues can usually be resolved straight away. Again, major issues will be dealt with by the Student Welfare Officer as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of both the host family and the student.

### **Dealing with Student Discipline Issues**

Students are generally respectful and cooperative and should be treated with dignity and respect. Students are also expected to abide by the rules and regulations of Berlitz College. Teachers are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism in the face of challenging student behaviour in the classroom. All disciplinary problems should be reported to the Director of Studies for appropriate action according to the Berlitz College policies controlling student conduct and discipline.