

Complaints policy

Table of changes

Date	Version	Summary of Amendments	Author
05.08. 2021	1	n/a	JC
25.4.2022	2	To reflect change from SEE to CEE	JC
05.01.2023	3	To reflect change from BIS to SEI	JC
To be reviewed 05.01.2024			

General

It is noted that SEI is owned by South England Exchange Ltd (SEE) and works closely with Cultural Experience England Ltd (CEE). Much of its complaints procedure is channelled through both companies' leadership teams. It is also noted that the principal of SEI is identical with the directors of the proprietor, SEE, and the director of CEE. Staff of SEI, SEE and CEE overlap but are not necessarily the same.

All placements in host families are made by Cultural Experience England Ltd, not SEI. Complaints about host families are complaints about Cultural Experience England Ltd.

Complaints from natural parents must be made through the partners. Natural parents must not communicate directly with SEI unless a contract has been signed which does not involve a partner.

Complaints about a host family must not be accompanied by photographs of a host family unless the photographs were taken either with the host family's permission or when accompanied by member of CEE staff investigating the complaint.

Complaints must not be aired on social media.

Complaints against SEI

Stage 1 - Informal

In the first instance, all complaints should be made informally to the principal, Juliet Cassells (juliet@southeastexchange.org). A record should be kept, in chronological order, of all correspondence, subsequent responses and action taken. SEI will respond to all complaints within 2 full days, although an extension can be agreed with the complainant. The response will give a full explanation of the decision and refer the complainant to the director if they wish to further pursue their complaint.

It is to be hoped that the matter will be resolved satisfactorily between the parties involved at this stage. If appropriate, it can be helpful to call informally upon the services of an impartial arbitrator who has some experience and prior knowledge of the circumstances, which led to the declaration of a grievance.

Stage 2 - Formal

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, then grievances should be directed in writing to the principal – The Principal, South England International School, 12 Russell Mews, Brighton, BN12HZ; email: juliet@southeastexchange.org; Telephone: +44 7796 997780

As for Stage 1, a record should be kept, in chronological order, of all correspondence, subsequent responses and action taken. The principal will respond to the complaint within 2 full days if no extension has been agreed with the complainant. The response will give a full explanation of the decision and refer the complainant to the panel stage if they wish to further pursue their complaint.

Stage 3 - Panel

If the grievance cannot be resolved successfully at stage 2, both parties may make formal representations, in writing, to the proprietor: South England Exchange Ltd, FAO The Director, 12 Russell Mews, Brighton BN1 2HZ; email: info@southeastexchange.org; Telephone: +44 7796 997780.

A complaints panel comprising three people, one of whom will act as chair, will be appointed by the proprietor to hear the grievance. The panel will be made up of arbiters who have not been previously involved with the matter of the complaint. At least one member of the panel must be independent of SEI, SEE and CEE. In those cases where it is deemed necessary, an interpreter may be in attendance. The decision of the panel will be final. SEI will receive and keep a written record of the complaint and action taken from the panel, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld or not. A written report

of the findings, along with any recommendations will be made available to the complainant and, where appropriate, the person who has been complained about.

Stage 4

Should the decision of the complaints panel at stage 3 fail to settle the grievance, the complainant has the right to pursue the grievance through the courts.

Complaints against Host Families

Where a student wishes to complain against a host family, the complaint is directed against Cultural Experience England, not SEI, and they need to follow these steps:

Step 1 – national manager

The student should speak to CEE's national manager, Eve Crow (eve@culturalexperienceengland.com). It is expected that the national manager can solve the problem. If not, she can assist with documenting the problem, for example where it becomes necessary to visit the host family and inspect the home. The national manager will keep a record of all correspondence and notes about actions and outcomes.

Step 2 –director

The student should address himself to CEE's director (juliet@culturalexperienceengland.com). A record will be kept of all correspondence, actions and outcomes.

Only where steps 1 and 2 do not lead to a solution, can the student speak to the partner organisation abroad. It is desirable that the partner organisation keeps records of any complaints correspondence.

The partner organisation will try to resolve the problem with CEE as set out in the "complaints against SEI" procedure steps 1 and 2 above.

Step 3 – panel

If the grievance cannot be resolved successfully at stage 2, both parties may make formal representations, in writing, to the trustees of AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) c/o:

Yasemin Wigglesworth - Executive Officer AEGIS; The Wheelhouse Bond's Mill Estate Bristol Road Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 3RF. E-mail: info@aegisuk.net Telephone: +44 (0) 1453 821293

South England International School

URN: 18591

DfE Registration: 846/6030

www.southeastinternational.com

Known as South England International School until January 2023



A complaints panel comprising three people, one of whom will act as chair, will be appointed by the trustees to hear the grievance. The panel will be made up of independent and impartial arbiters. In those cases where it is deemed necessary, an interpreter may be in attendance. The decision of the panel will be final. AEGIS will keep a written record of the complaint and action taken, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld or not. A written report of the findings, along with any recommendations will be made available to the complainant and, where appropriate, the person who has been complained about.

Record Keeping

All records of complaints are kept in the appropriate digital file (student file / host family file / general complaints file) on the company's virtual drive and deleted after 10 years or earlier if requested by all parties.

Proprietor: South England Exchange Ltd.

Registered office: 12 Russell Mews, Brighton, BN12HZ

24 hour hotline: 07796997780

DSL: Juliet Cassells

info@southeastexchange.org