

Complaints Policy & Resolution Procedure

Tom Wicks Tutoring — Standards of Service & Feedback Management

Tutor / Business Name:	Tom Wicks / Tom Wicks Tutoring
Contact Email:	tomwickstutoring@gmail.com
Policy Review Date:	August 2026 (Annual Review)

1. Purpose and Philosophy

I am committed to providing high-quality, professional, and reliable private tutoring. However, if a parent, guardian, or student is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided, this policy outlines a clear, transparent, and fair process for raising and resolving concerns.

Because I operate as a sole practitioner, complaints are handled directly by me with full accountability, objectivity, and a commitment to amicable resolution.

2. Scope of This Policy

This policy applies to general concerns and dissatisfaction regarding:

- **Teaching Standards & Delivery:** Pacing, academic resources, subject preparation, or communication style.
- **Administrative Matters:** Scheduling, punctuality, billing, or technical setup issues during online tutorials.
- **Professional Conduct:** General breaches of agreed working standards or terms of service.

Important Note: If a complaint involves allegations of child abuse, physical or emotional harm, or serious safeguarding/boundary breaches, it is not handled under this policy. Such matters must be referred immediately to statutory authorities as detailed in Section 6 and my Child Protection Policy.

3. Informal Resolution Process (Stage 1)

Most issues can be quickly resolved through open, constructive dialogue:

- **Initial Discussion:** Parents or guardians are encouraged to raise any initial concerns via telephone, email, or a brief conversation before/after an agreed session.
- **Tutor Action:** I will listen actively, discuss constructive adjustments to tuition methods or administrative arrangements, and seek an immediate informal resolution.
- **Timescale:** Informal discussions will typically take place within 48 hours of being raised.

4. Formal Complaint Procedure (Stage 2)

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the matter is too serious for informal discussion:

1. Written Submission: The parent/guardian should submit a formal complaint in writing to tomwickstutoring@gmail.com with the subject line 'Formal Complaint'. The email should state the nature of the issue, relevant dates/times, and the desired outcome.

2. Acknowledgment: I will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 2 working days.

3. Investigation & Self-Review: I will objectively review session logs, tutorial notes, communications, and past correspondence relevant to the complaint within 7 working days.

4. Formal Response: I will provide a full written response within 10 working days of receipt. This will outline my findings, proposed actions, and any agreed remedies (e.g., modified pedagogical plans, billing adjustments, or session rescheduling).

5. Mediation & Contractual Termination (Stage 3)

If a formal complaint cannot be mutually resolved:

- **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):** Both parties may mutually agree to independent mediation via an accredited alternative dispute resolution body or small claims mediation service.
- **Termination of Services:** If the tutoring relationship has irreparably broken down, either party may terminate the tutoring agreement immediately, ensuring any outstanding fees or pre-paid credits are reconciled fairly.

6. Escalation for Safeguarding & Statutory Breaches

Where a concern involves potential child harm, misconduct, or statutory regulatory breaches, complainants are not required to follow internal complaint stages and may contact external authorities directly:

- **Child Protection & Safeguarding:** Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Local Children's Social Care (MASH), or the NSPCC (0808 800 5000).
- **Criminal Conduct or Emergencies:** Contact the Police on 999 (Emergency) or 101 (Non-emergency).
- **Data Protection Breaches:** If a data privacy complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, complaints can be lodged directly with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at ico.org.uk or 0303 123 1113.

7. Record Keeping and Continuous Improvement

- **Complaint Log:** A confidential written record of all formal complaints, including outcomes and actions taken, will be securely retained for 2 years (separate from routine student records).
- **Annual Review:** Complaints data will be reviewed annually to identify systemic opportunities to improve teaching quality, business administration, and client communications.