

EASTON AND OTLEY COLLEGE COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Easton & Otley College is committed to providing a high quality of customer service by working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect with stakeholders.

This policy and supporting processes are in place to ensure that all compliments and complaints are dealt with in a respectful, professional and timely manner.

We consider all compliments and complaints to be positive in nature as they help us to identify areas we perform to a high standard in and also to develop and identify areas in which we can improve the service we offer.

All complaints will be dealt with sensitively and in line with our Safeguarding policy and practices.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy aims to:

- Ensure all complaints are dealt with in fair manner for all involved
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely fashion
- Ensure there are stages in the process to be able to uplift a complaint should the initial stage not be to the satisfaction of the complainant
- Ensure that compliments are recorded and feedback to the appropriate person

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Officer

The Responsible Officer is the person who is allocated to investigate the complaint and abide by the policy stages.

Executive Assistant

The Executive Assistant will administer complaints from acknowledgement through to closure of complaint. Their role is predominately to log complaints and monitor progress.

Principal

The Principal will not be involved in a complaint until it has progressed to its furthest stage and all avenues have been exhausted. This is to ensure that they can carry out a fair and unbiased appeal.

Publication	COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY			
	Last review date	August 2018	Status	Live
	Next review date	July 2019	Post-holder responsible:	<i>Principal</i>
	Last EqIA date		Approval required from:	SLT

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 Definitions

Compliments

A compliment is an expression of praise and satisfaction. We welcome all compliments to acknowledge what we do well and also to feedback to our staff and students on the high levels of service that they deliver.

All compliments will be fed back to the relevant person(s) or departments and shared with the Leadership Team. To make a compliment, please follow the Compliments Process map.

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Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction and is something that is personal to the complainant. We positively welcome all complaints and are grateful for the time taken to inform us of the ways in which we can improve.

In addressing issues that may have given rise to a complaint, complainants are strongly encouraged to resolve the matter initially through informal discussion with appropriate members of staff. Should the matter not be dealt with to the complainant's satisfaction, the college operates a three stage complaint process. All complaints must follow this process and not move directly to Stage 2 or 3.

All complaints, regardless of the stage they are at, will be addressed within 7 working days of acknowledgement of the complaint. Under exceptional circumstances such as bank holidays, awaiting on evidence from an external provider etc this timeframe may need to be extended. Should this be the case, the complainant will be informed of the delay and given a further date of response.

To make a complaint please follow the Formal Complaint Stages 1-3 Process maps

4.2 Complaint Stages

Stage 1 Formal Complaint

A Responsible Officer is appointed at a Stage 1 Formal Complaint. The Responsible Officer will carry out a full investigation into the complaint and will provide feedback to the complainant within 7 working days of acknowledgement of the complaint.

The Responsible Officer will be the most senior manager within the department appropriate to the complaint.

If the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome they may appeal within 7 working days to the Executive Assistant to express their dissatisfaction and highlight the areas they remain unhappy with. The Executive Assistant will progress this to Stage 2.

Stage 2 Escalation

A Responsible Director is appointed at a Stage 2 Formal Complaint. The Responsible Director will review all evidence gained at Stage 1 and look further into the reasons why the complainant remains unhappy.

The Responsible Director will be the Director of the department most appropriate to the complaint.

If the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome they may appeal within 7 working days to the Executive Assistant to express their dissatisfaction and highlight the areas they remain unhappy with. The Executive Assistant will progress this to Stage 3.

Stage 3 Appeal

The Principal is the person appointed to carry out a Stage 3 Formal Complaint. The Principal will carry out a full review of all information previously submitted at Stage 1 and Stage 2 and decide if there is sufficient further evidence to progress, or if the complaint has not been dealt with appropriately at stages 1 and 2 of the process.

In some cases, the Principal may decide that the investigation has been carried out satisfactorily and no further evidence has been provided to justify a further investigation. As such, the Principal will write directly to the complainant to inform them of this.

If the Principal is not satisfied the investigation has been carried out appropriately, or that further evidence has been provided to substantiate the complaint, the Principal reserves the right to extend the 7 working day deadline for a further 7 working days to allow the complainant to meet with the Principal.

Right of Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the response from the Principal then, depending upon the nature of your complaint, you may have a further right of appeal to an external body. If this applies to you, the Executive Assistant will inform you and provide contact details for your appeal. This right of appeal could apply if:

- You are taking a further education course, then you could appeal to the Skills Funding Agency. Details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/complainfurthereducationapprenticeship>
- You are taking a higher education course validated by the University of East Anglia (UEA) and your complaint relates to an academic judgement or outcome. In this situation you may be entitled to appeal to the UEA and possibly afterwards to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (see the HE Academic Appeals Procedure); <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>
- Your complaint relates to our adherence to the Data Protection Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000, then you could appeal to the Office of the Information Commissioner.

4.3 Exceptions

Should the responsible member of staff of any complaint stage be absent from work for sufficient time that would impact upon the 7 working day response, the Executive Assistant will allocate the next most senior suitable person to investigate the complaint.

In the case of a Stage 3 Appeal, the next most senior Director will be responsible. In most cases this would be the Deputy Principal.

4.4 Complaints Against a Member of Staff

If the complaint is regarding a member of staff, the normal processes will remain in place however it may not be possible to share all aspects of the investigation with the complainant. This is due to employee rights should the investigation lead to a formal disciplinary hearing. The complainant will be informed that the complaint is being dealt with by the Human Resource team.

4.5 Unacceptable Behaviour

The college operates a zero tolerance of harassment and abuse towards staff and as such, should the complainant become vexatious or a complaint contain offensive behaviour or language not relevant to the complaint we reserve the right to not review the matter until such a time as the complaint can be delivered in an acceptable and professional manner.

4.6 Office Of The Independent Adjudicator

Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their Stage Three Appeal, or whose Appeal or Complaint was rejected without a hearing, may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

COMPLAINT FORM DETAILS OF COMPLAINANT

Complainant Name	
Address	
Email	
Telephone	
Course details	
Campus	

COMPLAINT DETAILS

Please complete the below box with as much detail about the complaint as possible to assist the Investigating Officer

Date of alleged event				
Details of complaint				
Are there witnesses?	Yes		No	

If yes, investigating officer to arrange to meet the witnesses and complete a witness statement

Investigating Officer to:

- Explain the role of the investigating officer
- Explain the need for confidentiality
- Explain that anonymity cannot be guaranteed
- Explain that the statement given may be provided as evidence
- Explain next steps

For office use only

COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY

Discussion		Letter		Telephone		Email	
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AREA OF COMPLAINT

Course	Campus Services	Staff	Catering	Sport & Leisure	Admin/ Finance	Other

ALLOCATION

Name of investigating officer	
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COMPLAINT TIMELINE

Date complaint received	
7 working day date	

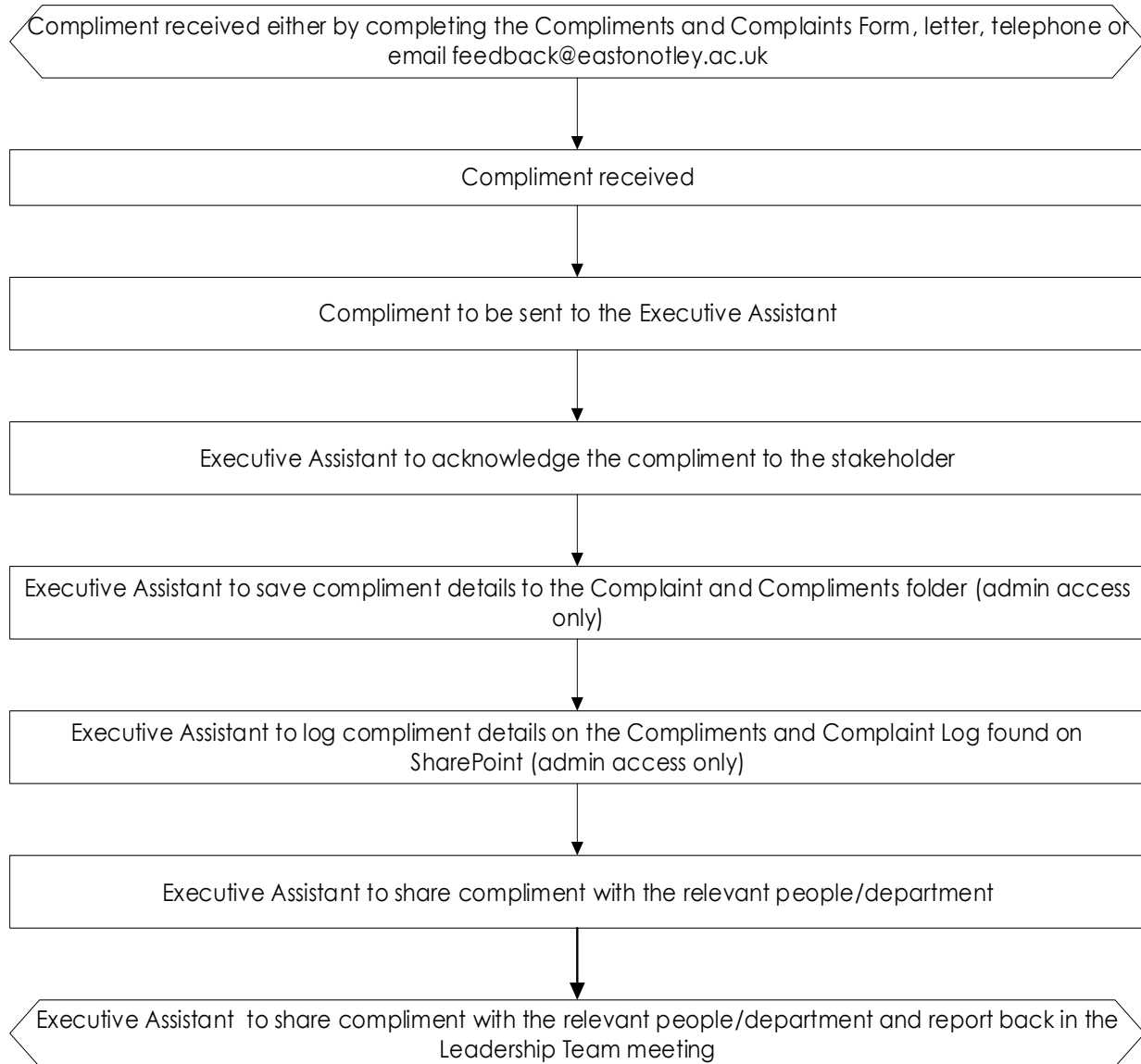
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Letter of acknowledgement sent by Executive Assistant	
Date recorded for reply in Investigating Officer's calendar by PA to the Principal & Chief Executive	
Copy of complaint sent to HR Director if the complaint is against a member of staff	

NEXT STEPS

Executive Assistant to send complaint close down letter to complainant	
Executive Assistant to update the Complaints Log on SharePoint	
Executive Assistant to feedback complaint to the Leadership Team	

COMPLIMENT PROCESS

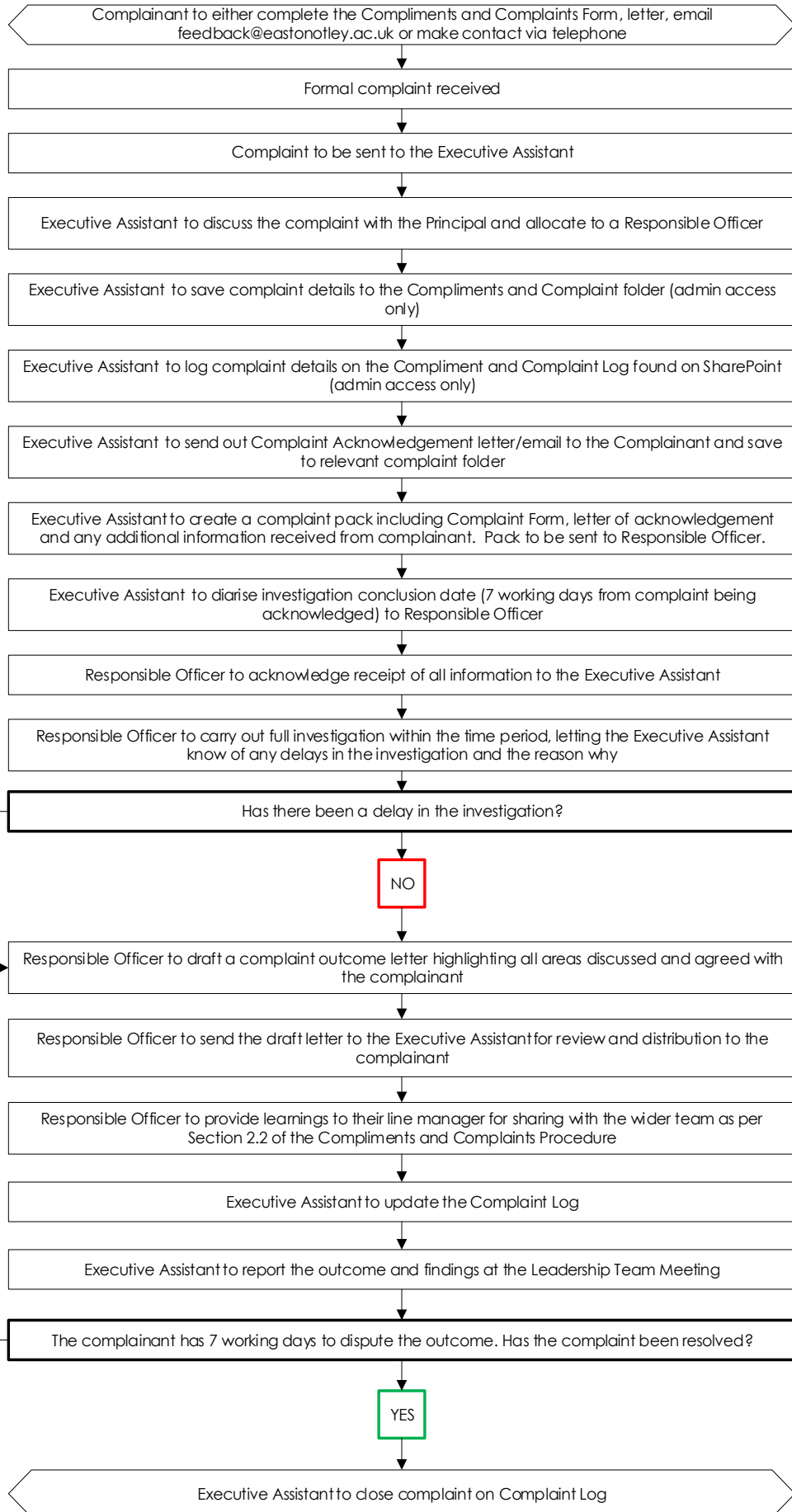


TITLE	HUMAN RESOURVES BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY		
LAST REVIEW DATE	16/08/2018	STATUS	Draft
NEXT REVIEW DATE	16/07/2020	POST HOLDER RESPONSIBLE:	Head fo HR
LAST EQIA DATE		APPROVAL REQUIRED FROM:	SLT



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STAGE 1 FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS



YES

Executive Assistant to let the Complainant know of the delay and update the Complaint Log

Responsible Officer to resume investigation as soon as possible

NO

Responsible Officer to draft a complaint outcome letter highlighting all areas discussed and agreed with the complainant

Responsible Officer to send the draft letter to the Executive Assistant for review and distribution to the complainant

Responsible Officer to provide learnings to their line manager for sharing with the wider team as per Section 2.2 of the Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Executive Assistant to update the Complaint Log

Executive Assistant to report the outcome and findings at the Leadership Team Meeting

NO

Executive Assistant to commence to Stage 2 of the Complaint

The complainant has 7 working days to dispute the outcome. Has the complaint been resolved?

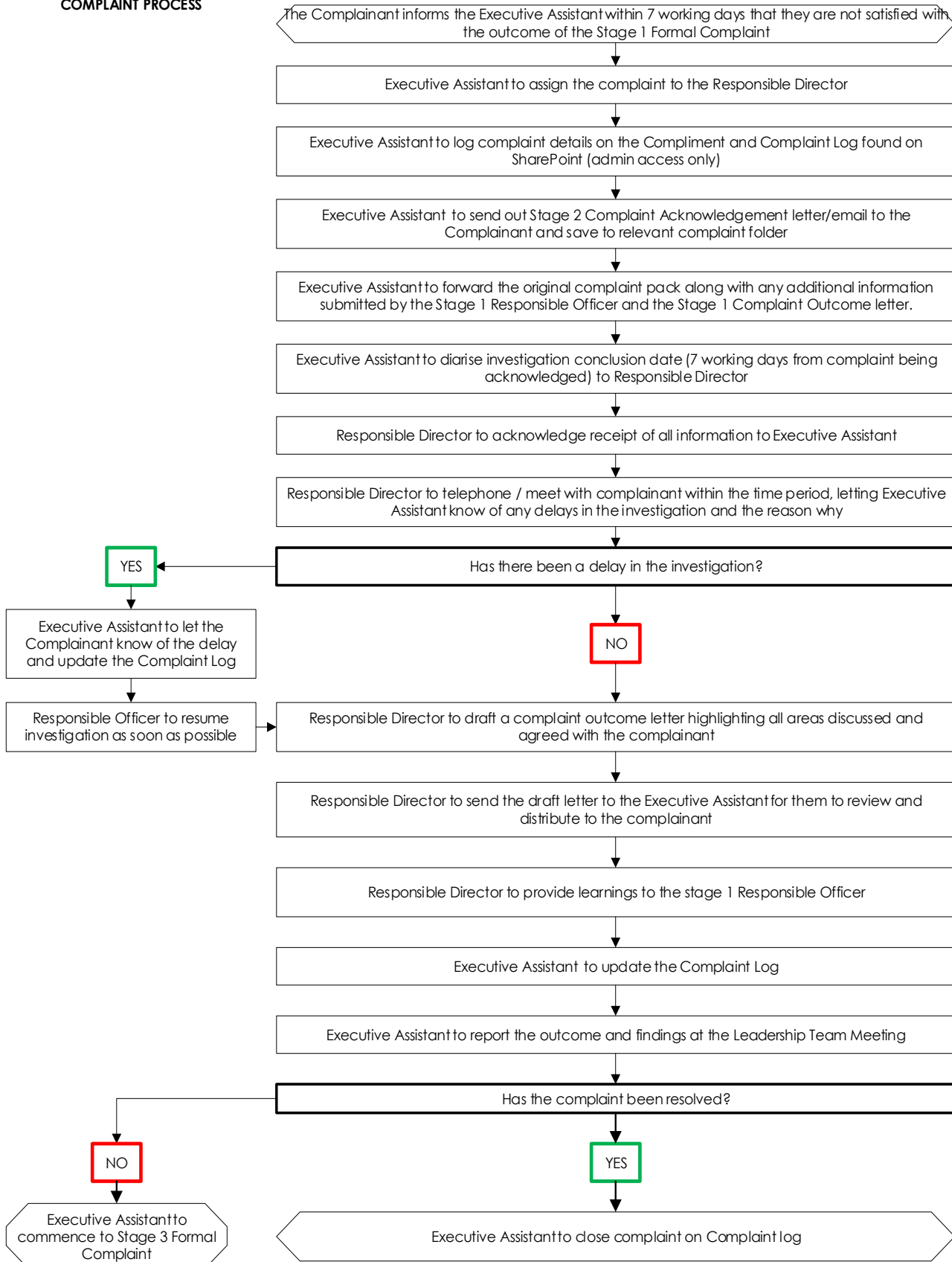
YES

Executive Assistant to close complaint on Complaint Log



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STAGE 2 FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS





STAGE 3 FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

