



APPENDIX A: RECORD OF LEARNER COMPLAINTS

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standard 15.2

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) is the national agency for the accreditation of professional degree programs in pharmacy and providers of continuing pharmacy education.

The colleges and schools of pharmacy have an obligation to respond to any written complaints by learners lodged against the college or school of pharmacy, or the pharmacy program that are related to the standards and the policies and procedures of ACPE. The college or school of pharmacy shall establish, implement, and maintain a learner complaint procedure that affords the complainant fundamental procedural due process. The college or school of pharmacy should communicate the complaint policy to learners. The college or school of pharmacy, or the pharmacy program, shall maintain a file that contains the written complaint, a written record of each step of the complaint procedure, and the outcome, except as otherwise prohibited by state or federal law. The files shall be made available for inspection to ACPE at on-site evaluations or otherwise at ACPE's written request. The findings of this inspection, and the resulting implications(s) to the accreditation of the professional program, shall be noted in the Evaluation Team Report.

Complaints relative to ACPE standards will be handled using the grievance procedures of the College. ACPE has an obligation to assure itself that any institution which seeks or holds a pre-accreditation or accreditation status for its professional program(s) conducts its affairs with honesty and frankness. Complaints from other institutions, learners, faculty, or the public against a college or school of pharmacy, including tuition and fee policies, and as related to ACPE standards, policies or procedures, shall be placed in writing in detail by the complainant and submitted to the ACPE office. The complaint shall be submitted to the institution for response. Requests for confidentiality shall be respected to the extent any such information is not necessary for the resolution of the complaint.

The Executive Director shall, based upon the complaint, the response, and information from such further investigation deemed necessary, promptly determine the facts surrounding the issue, determine the validity of the complaint, and resolve the issue; provided, however, where the Executive Director deems it necessary or appropriate, the matter shall be considered at the next regular meeting of the Council. The time frame for resolution is generally within six months. A record of complaints regarding a specific college or school of pharmacy, including learner complaints received or made available, is kept for consideration on file at the Council office. Such record of complaint is considered during scheduled evaluations, or a special evaluation, as the case may require.

The procedure shall provide for treatment of complaints in a timely manner that is fair and equitable to all parties. The complainant shall be advised of the decision or action as soon as possible. When ACPE has cause to believe that any institution with which it is concerned is acting in an unethical manner or is deliberately misrepresenting itself to learners or the public, it will investigate the matter and provide the institution an opportunity to respond to the allegations. If, on the basis of such investigation, after notice to the institution and opportunity for institutional response, ACPE finds an institution has engaged in unethical conduct or that its integrity has been seriously undermined, ACPE will either:

- a. request that the institution show cause, within a stated time period, why adverse action should not be taken, or
- b. in extreme cases, immediately discontinue its relationship with the institution by denying or withdrawing pre-accreditation or accreditation status.

A complaint against a college or a school of pharmacy must be related to the standards or the policies and procedures of ACPE and must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director. Under existing practices, when a complaint is received, it is submitted to the college or school affected for response. If, thereafter, based upon the complaint and the response, the Executive Director determines that a complaint is not related to the standards or policies, the complainant is so advised in writing with a copy to the school or college, and the matter is treated as resolved.

Anonymous complaints pertaining to accreditation matters are retained and may or may not be forwarded to the school or college involved, depending on circumstances, and the severity of the complaint. This decision is made by the Executive Director. Where a complainant has threatened or filed legal action against the institution involved, ACPE will hold complaints in abeyance pending resolution of the legal issues and the complainant is so advised.

If the Executive Director finds a complaint to be extremely serious in nature, charging egregious conduct that may warrant adverse action by the Council, or involves an interpretation which the Executive Director believes should be made by the Council, the complaint will be submitted to the Council for determination at the next regular meeting. Extraordinary remedies available for complaints covering extreme cases are set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) above.

ACPE has an obligation to respond to any complaints which may be lodged against it by any institution, learner, faculty or third party in respect to the application of ACPE's standards, policies, and procedures where the complaining party is directly affected thereby. Any such complaint shall be submitted in writing. The Executive Director shall promptly determine the facts surrounding the issues and shall attempt to resolve the matter in consultation with the Public Interest Panel established pursuant to Article V of the ACPE By-Laws. Complaints which cannot be resolved by the Executive Director shall be considered and resolved at the next regular meeting of the Council. The time frame for resolution is generally within six months.

COMPLAINTS

To file a complaint with the ACPE, email:

csinfo@acpe-accredit.org (regarding a professional degree program)

ceinfo@acpe-accredit.org (regarding a continuing education provider)

In addition, you may also contact ACPE at:

135 S. LaSalle Street

Suite 4100

Chicago, IL 60603-4810

Phone: (312) 664-3575

Fax: (312) 664-4652

info@acpe-accredit.org