



Complaints Policy

Introduction

1. The College welcomes comments from students, parents, staff and the wider community on the quality of the service it provides. Constructive positive or negative feedback provides a key role in reviewing our work so that we can improve our provision in the future and so that we can ensure that the individuals involved are treated fairly.
2. Students and parents/Carers have the right to expect the college to consider complaints fairly and quickly, and whenever possible the issue should be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, ideally at stage 1 of the procedure.
3. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, although all parties will need to accept that some information may need to be shared if the complaint is to be fully investigated.
4. All those involved in the process must be treated fairly and have the opportunity to state their case. Individuals involved should be offered support in making a complaint or in dealing with a complaint.
5. The college will maintain a record of formal complaints in the College Complaints Register. The college will receive an annual summary evaluation of the number and general character of complaints, compliments and suggestions and subsequent resolution/planned action. This will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

Definition/Scope

The College has defined a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response'. Complaints about College activity can come from any source.

This procedure applies to general concerns and complaints. Some complaints/disputes are subject to statutory or alternative procedures. Issues which cannot be considered as 'in scope' for the Complaints Policy include:

- Safeguarding or Prevent concerns
- Complaints which are made more than 15 working days after the original incident causing concern (unless there are special circumstances justifying a delayed complaint)
- Matters which are subject to legal action or concern employment issues
- Contractual disputes
- Matters not within the College's control or responsibility

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- Examination results (subject to appeals process with the relevant awarding body)
- Complaints of a vexatious or malicious nature

In these situations, where possible the complainant should be directed to other courses of action.

Stages of the Complaints Procedure

These are described in detail in the Complaints Procedure Flowchart below. In summary these are:

Stage		
1	Informal Procedure	Initial stage in which the complainant is supported in resolving the concern to their satisfaction without recourse to formal procedure. All concerns/complaints in writing or by email and resolved at the informal stage will be logged on the College Complaints Register as 'Resolved at Stage 1 (Informal). The complainant should attempt to resolve the matter directly with any member of staff where possible.
2	Formal – Investigation and Report	The Complainant completes the College Complaint Form. From this point the complaint should proceed within the stated timeframes. An Investigating Officer is appointed and following an investigation a summary report is shared with all involved. The complainant will be requested to complete the College Complaint Response Form. If the complaint is resolved at the end of this stage then it should be logged on the College Complaints Register as 'Resolved at Stage 2 (Formal – Investigation and Report)
3	Formal – Internal Appeal	The Complainant wishes to appeal against the outcome of the investigation or about the way in which the complaint has been investigated. The complainant must clearly state their case for an internal appeal in writing. The Operations Manager or a member of the College Leadership Team (other than the original investigating officer) will carry out a review of the evidence and the complainant's written statement. If appropriate, the Operations Manager will meet with the complainant and may carry out further enquiries focusing on the unresolved issues. The complainant will be notified of the outcome. The internal College Complaints Process ends at this stage. If the complaint is resolved at the end of this stage then it should be logged on the

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		College Complaints Register as 'Resolved at Stage 3 (Formal- Internal Appeal).
4	Formal – External Appeal	<p>Provided Stages 1, 2 and 3 have been completed, the complainant may request a hearing with the Board of Trustees to lodge their remaining concerns prior to a decision to appeal to an appropriate external body. If the complainant remains dissatisfied then they will be directed to the Board of Trustees or an appropriate external body to make a formal external appeal. The complaint will be logged on the College Complaints Register as 'Stage 4 (Formal – External Appeal). The decision made at this stage will be final.</p>



Formal Complaint Form

Please return in a sealed envelope marked 'Complaint – For the Attention of the Operations Manager by hand to the College reception or by post.

Your Details:

Name		Address	
Telephone No			
Mobile No		email	

Nature and Details of the Complaint:

Please explain the problem as clearly and specifically as possible – give dates, locations and the names of others involved. Use additional sheets if required

What reasonable steps do you believe should be taken to address this problem:

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Complainants Signature:

Date Complaint Submitted:

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Formal Complaint Response Form

Please return in a sealed envelope marked 'Complaint Response – For the Attention of the Operations Manager by hand to the College reception or by post.

Your Details:

Name		Address	
Telephone No			
Mobile No		email	

Complaint Reference Number:

We will be grateful if you could complete this response form concerning the above complaint

Did the college respond in a timely fashion at each stage of the process?

Was the complaint resolved to your satisfaction?

What, if anything, could the college have done to improve any aspect of this process?

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