

Students Complaint Policy

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Policy approved by:	Academic Board	6/5/03	Minute 226
	Strategic Management Team	7/5/03	Minute 768
	Operational Management Team	9/5/03	Minute 23
	Curriculum and Quality Committee	19/5/03	Minute 70
Policy updated	November 2002, May 2007		
Reviewed by:	Executive	August 2006	
	Strategic Management Team	21/05/07	Minute 1224
	Curriculum & Quality Committee	14/11/07	Minute 193
Review date:	March 2010		

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Preamble to the Policy

Equal Opportunities

The College shall comply with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act 2005), the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Human Rights Act 1998 (or any enactment modifying or replacing them) and all relevant statutory duties in respect of equal opportunities.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Statement

The College shall have particular regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act 2005) in respect of this policy.

The Act applies to people who are disabled according to the definition of disability in the DDA 1995. That is, a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

That effect must be:

1. Substantial (that is, more than minor or trivial), and
2. Adverse, and
3. Long-term (that is, has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

The College is committed to take all reasonable steps to implement or adjust the policy taking in the circumstances of each individual. Reasonable steps may include, for example, alternative format documents, special arrangements for meetings (Please note the examples are not exhaustive).

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Complaints Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The College recognises the value of listening to those who it serves. This policy encourages students, potential students and other customers of the College to make their views known to the staff of the College. The College will properly consider and investigate every complaint made and make the result of any investigation known to the complainant. Informal complaints arising day by day should be dealt with directly by the members of staff involved.

2. Key Features

- 2.1 The key features of the complaints procedure are accessibility to the system of complaining, speed in reply to a complaint, flexibility to reflect different circumstances, non-bureaucratic style, impartiality and confidentiality.

3. Publicity

- 3.1 The means of complaining is advertised by leaflets in reception areas, student handbook, induction talks and electronically.

4. Complaints Procedure

- 4.1 The Principals Office logs complaints to ensure they are being dealt with in line with the Students Complaints Policy and Our Commitments to Students Policy time limits.
- 4.2 Formal complaints must be in writing.
- 4.3 Formal complaints must be received and logged by The Principal/Chief Executive's Secretary.
- 4.4 The Principals Office, under the guidance of the Executive Director (Curriculum & Quality) or Learner Services Officer, passes the complaint to a senior person who is responsible for the matter in question.
- 4.5 They should resolve the complaint and let The Principal/Chief Executive's Secretary know when and how it is resolved, for the record. Copies of the papers surrounding the complaint will be filed with The Principals Office.
- 4.6 The Executive Director (Curriculum & Quality) should be contacted if a complaint causes concern.
- 4.7 The Principals Office is to monitor progress on complaints to ensure that they are dealt with in line with the Charter deadlines and this procedure. The role is not to answer complaints unless they directly related to the work of the unit.

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- 4.8 Complaints will receive a reply within 10 days of arrival in College.
- 4.9 Prior to replying the investigating manager should seek the Principal's approval on the wording of the reply.
- 4.10 The Learner Services aided by The Principals Office will produce management information on complaints for managers and governors.
- 4.11 Staff may wish to retrospectively log details of a complaint with The Principals Office to ensure that details are logged.
- 4.12 The complainant may appeal to the Principal if they are not satisfied with the reply to their complaint.
- 4.13 If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the reply to their complaint they may complain to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Corporation. The Clerk will then convene a group of governors to hear the complaint.
- 4.14 Persons wishing to complain to the Department for Lifelong Learning Skills (DELLS) will be given the address and made aware of its role.
- 4.15 This system is to handle customer complaints and not for staff who have other systems open to them such as grievance procedures or 'whistleblowing' procedure.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

- 5.1 This policy will be monitored and evaluated as follows:
 - 5.1.2 Senior managers receive a weekly summary of complaints
 - 5.1.3 The Corporation, Strategic Management Team and Academic Board receive an annual report on complaints.
 - 5.1.4 The Learner Services Officer annually reviews how the complaints system is operating and fundamentally reviews this procedure in a four-year cycle.