



Longley Park Sixth Form College

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

If you feel that the College has let you down in any way please let us know. We need to understand where we have gone wrong if we are to do anything about it. Your first step should be to talk to your Principal Tutor or Director of Teaching & Learning who will attempt to resolve issues. If this doesn't work, you should consider making a formal written complaint. The College will then respond to this as set out below.

The College's Mission and purpose in all aspects of its activity is to strive for excellence and achieve high standards. The College's aim is, therefore, to have few, or no complaints about any aspects of its activity. Where complaints do arise, the College will always:

- Express regret that the complainant feels they have cause to complain.
- Attempt to resolve the complaint promptly, informally and fairly.
- Take the complaint seriously.
- Ensure that the complainant is kept fully informed of the procedure and the outcome of their complaint.
- Ensure that the complainant is aware of procedures to help them progress their complaint.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints about College activity can come from any source. The main likely sources of complaints however will be:

<i>Students</i>	concerning aspects of their programme of study, the resourcing, delivery and final outcome. (<i>The appeals procedure against final grades will remain as outlined in subject handbooks</i>).
<i>Parents</i>	concerning aspects of the organisation of their son or daughter's programme of study.
<i>Members of the public</i>	concerning the impact of the operation of the College on the locality through, for example, student behaviour or traffic management.

In addition, complaints may concern a perceived failure of the College to deliver its Mission or fulfil expectations; aspects of employee behaviour; the conduct or outcome of examinations; the failure of the College to conform to its own policies, as well as other issues.

In all cases the same procedure and time-scales should operate, although the complaints and complainants will vary widely.

1. The member of staff receiving the original complaint should seek to establish:

- That this is a complaint and the person wishes it to be treated as a complaint.
- That the complainant is prepared to put the complaint in writing.

Where the above does not apply, the College should still try to respond positively to the concern, and should make it clear that the Complaints Procedure is available at any time. The member of staff receiving the complaint should inform the Principal. However, if they are unavailable or it is

inappropriate for them to be informed the complainant should consult either the Deputy Principal or Vice-Principal.

The complaint is tracked from this point to ensure timeframes are followed.

Stage One

2. Concern or dissatisfaction should be raised in the first instance with a member of staff as soon as possible and not later than six weeks after the reason for the complaint. The member of staff dealing with the complaint should record details on the Complaints Form (Appendix 1) and make every reasonable effort to resolve the complaint promptly at local level.
3. If a complaint is about a member of staff it should be referred to their Director of Teaching & Learning or other line manager. Oral complaints to Reception and staff in public areas should be referred to the head of the area, which is the subject of the complaint. If the complaint is of a serious enough nature the Disciplinary Procedure will automatically be instigated.
4. If the member of staff is unable to resolve the issue, the complaint moves to stage two.

Stage Two

5. If the complainant wishes to proceed, they should be given a copy of this procedure and asked to summarise their complaint in writing, if they have not done so already. This action should be undertaken by the Principal who will then appoint a senior member of staff (referred to as "the Investigator") to investigate the complaint and produce a report on findings. A response will be given to the complainant within ten working days. The response should be in writing and should always include regret for the fact that the complainant has found it necessary to complain. The written response will be from the person appointed to investigate the complaint.

Appeals

6. At this stage, many complaints will be resolved. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint they may appeal in writing to the Principal within one calendar month of the decision.
7. The Appeal Panel will meet within seven working days of the receipt of the above. The panel will consist of the Principal, one other member of College Management Team excluding the Investigator and two members of the Corporation. The decision of the panel is final, but the complainant will be informed of the existence of the LSC complaints procedure where necessary.

Conduct of the Appeal

- 8.1 The conduct of the appeal should be as friendly as possible within a formal framework.
- 8.2 The complainant will have received appropriate notice, in writing, of the time of the Appeal Panel and will have been invited to attend. The complainant may be accompanied or represented by a "friend" if they wish. If the friend is a legal representative, the College should be informed of this before the panel meets.
- 8.3 The complainant will present their appeal, and the reasons for their dissatisfaction with the outcome, to the panel. They are not required to make this presentation in writing. The panel may ask questions.

8.4 The senior member of staff who investigated the complaint will present the College case and detail the present College view. This could be:

- The College feels the complaint to be unfounded or frivolous.
- The College feels everything possible has been done to resolve the complaint.

The panel may ask questions.

8.5 Both the complainant and the Investigator will withdraw, and the Appeal Panel will notify the results of their conclusions to the complainant, in writing, within three working days.

8.6 The Appeal Panel should not normally sit for a longer period than thirty minutes, and should aim to respond positively to the complainant throughout.

9. It is important that a written record is kept throughout so the facts can be established promptly before recollections fade or distort. Statements should be taken from individuals who become part of the investigation. All documentation should be regarded as confidential by all parties throughout, and held by the Investigator. This will be held centrally on conclusion of the complaint.

COMPLAINTS FORM

Name: Student Number:
 Address:
 Post Code: Telephone Number:

 Course Name:
 Course Tutor:
 Nature and details of Complaint:

(Continue overleaf if necessary)

Broadly to do with – Tick as appropriate:

- 1) Course Teaching Assessment
- 2) Facilities/Building/Car Parks
- 3) Staff/Student
- 4) Discrimination*
- 5) Other

*Type of discrimination

	Age	
	Race	
	Sex	
	Disability	
	Learning Difficulties	

Signed:
Member of Staff

Date:

Note to Complainant

You will receive a date-stamped photocopy of this form from the Member of Staff taking your complaint along with subsequent responses as outlined in the Complaints Procedure.

Mo Nisbet
Principal