

Kensington and Chelsea College

Complaints Policy & Procedures

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Signing off requirements:

Corporation

Exec

HR

Unions

Single Equality Duty Committee (SED)

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COMPLAINTS STATEMENT & PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

Kensington and Chelsea College is committed to providing a first class service. We will do our best to ensure that all learners have a successful and enjoyable experience while studying at the College. We are also committed to delivering excellent services to the business and local communities we serve. We are committed to using feedback to review and improve our services.

We recognise, however, that sometimes we do not achieve our best standards. Occasionally mistakes are made and things are not done as well as they should be. We have a commitment to our students and stakeholders to ensure that any complaints they may have about our service are dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively to the best of our capability and within our resources.

Complaints will be regularly analysed and a summary report provided to senior managers and the Corporation. In addition we will publish some of the key actions taken to improve services in response to your feedback, in college receptions.

We will make clear to complainants how to complain when things go wrong. We will provide appropriate support for clients with physical impairments or low literacy skills, if required. We will ensure that we are sensitive to issues of confidentiality.

We also welcome positive suggestions and compliments about our services.

This policy and procedure has been analysed in order to provide equality and minimise negative impact on any social group.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

This procedure is for the use of Kensington and Chelsea College students, parents, employers, visitors to the college and the general public. Students who are dissatisfied with the outcomes of internal assessments should use the Academic Appeals procedure not the Complaints Procedure.

1. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

1.1 College based provision

Before using this procedure, you are requested to talk directly about your dissatisfaction with the individual(s) most involved, to see if an informal resolution is possible. Students can try to resolve issues through their tutors or if they prefer, a member of the learner services team, or one of the college youth workers. The college also has feedback cards for clients to write their comments, suggestions and complaints. These can be dropped into one of the suggestion boxes on site. If clients require feedback from the college, they must include their details on the card. If these measures fail clients could raise the matter as a formal complaint.

1.2 Partnership provision

Students on partnership provision should approach the Centre or organisation Manager in the first instance. If the issue cannot be resolved, they should follow the formal procedure detailed below.

2. FORMAL COMPLAINT

2.1 Making the complaint

Where a complaint has not been resolved informally to your satisfaction, please make a written complaint to the Director of Learner Services. This should detail what went wrong and how you would like it to be resolved. You can write a letter, email or use one of the Complaint Forms available in reception and on the college website. The form is available in large print, or if you require an alternative format such as audiotape, please asks a member of the learner support team. Students who need help with writing can also get help to complete the form from their tutor, or a member of the learner support team.

The completed form, or letter should be sent to the Director of Learner Services.

2.2 Investigating the complaint

The Director of Learner Services will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days of receiving it and set out the timescale for dealing with it (normally a further 10 working days), except where the complaint requires further investigation and or, if the staff that the allegation is made against is absent for an extensive period.
- Ensure that the details are put on file and track the progress of your complaint until resolution.
- Send your complaint to the relevant Assistant Vice Principal who is responsible for the curriculum or service support section, for them to investigate and respond to you. However, a decision could be taken for another Senior Manager to carry out the investigation, in cases where the complaint directly involves the Assistant Vice Principal, or where there are multiple complaints received in the academic year, relating to the same area or same staff.

2.3 Our response to the complaint

Note: The College will not investigate or respond to formal anonymous complaints. Complainants must provide their name and contact details as part of the formal complaints procedure, which will enable the College to effectively communicate and thoroughly investigate concerns.

The relevant manager will investigate your complaint. As part of the investigation you may be invited to come in and discuss the issue further. In this case please let us know if you require an interpreter or other adjustment to be made to support you in this meeting.

You should receive a response within 10 working days. If the investigation is complex you will receive a progress report within 20 working days and information about when the final response will be sent to you.

If, in your view, the complaint relates to a serious staff incompetence, or inappropriate behaviour, then the Director of Learner Services will inform the appropriate member of the Executive team and the investigation will then be carried out under the relevant Human Resources policies and procedures.

If an issue relating to student behaviour with disciplinary potential, including instances of harassment, is revealed during the investigation, or if it is the nature of the original complaint, then the Director of Learner Services will inform the appropriate Assistant Vice Principal who will carry out an investigation under the Student Disciplinary Procedures and will inform the Vice Principal.

Impartial support through Learner Services team is available for students whose complaints are likely to lead to a student or staff disciplinary.

2.4 Appeal against the outcome of the complaint

If you want to appeal because you are not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, you may appeal in writing to the Principal. S/he will ensure that a senior manager carries out an investigation of the process that has been followed. If you have further evidence which wasn't provided as part of the initial investigations these can be presented for consideration as part of the appeal.

Appeals Process:

There will be a hearing before a panel, appointed by or on behalf of the principal and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

There will be a panel hearing and one panel member will be independent of the management and running of the college.

The hearing will allow learners to be accompanied by parents, carers or other preferred persons to attend the panel hearing if the complainant wishes.

The panel will also look at whether the process was thorough and consider all the evidence.

The panel will communicate findings and recommendations and provide a copy of those findings and recommendations to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about. (Within 10 working days).

If still dissatisfied, you can appeal to the relevant external body, Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for all Further Education learners or the Office of Independent Adjudicators (OIA) for learners undertaking HE courses. We will give you the name and address if your appeal is not upheld or you can find the details on the website.

2.5 Monitoring and Quality Improvement

The Director of Learner Services will keep a log of all formal complaints. These will be analysed and presented to the College Management Team and Governing Body each year.

The investigating officer of each complaint is required to consider if there are any changes to procedures or staff training required to prevent any other person having a similar negative experience. They will then ensure that the relevant action is taken.

We will report back improvements made as a result of your feedback in a way that does not identify you personally but shows that we are responsive.

Please also tell us when you are pleased with the services we provide.

How to Make a Complaint or Appeal

