

# Complaints Procedure

Version 2017



Policy Level:	SLT; Corporation
Last Review Date:	July 2017
Last Amendment Date:	July 2017
Next Review Date:	July 2020
Reviewed by:	David Blower

**Document Control Information:** The master copy of this document is held online. All printed copies of this document are uncontrolled.

**Distribution List:** Unless otherwise advised, those on the list below will be automatically informed of the release of the next version of this document when it becomes available.

## Complaints Procedure

The Complaints Procedure is intended for the use of students (and/or their parents) and can be applied appropriately, for the use of stakeholders and external users of College facilities, who may have a complaint about any aspect of life at the college or the education and other services provided by it.

A complaint may be a minor problem e.g. not being satisfied with the quality of feedback on a particular piece of homework, or a major one e.g. bullying; feeling that you are not being taught properly. Speaking to the member of staff concerned may clear up minor problems quickly and informally. If they are not dealt with satisfactorily at this stage, you may need to follow the procedures outlined below, starting at step 1. For serious complaints, go straight to step 2.

### Aims of the Complaints Procedure

Complaints to be dealt with fairly and quickly

All complaints will be investigated thoroughly. This may involve obtaining statements, interviewing witnesses or some form of hearing.

An initial response to be made as soon as possible and certainly within 10 working days.

The complainant to be kept informed of every step taken.

A clear explanation of the outcome of the complaint given. In the case of complaints beyond step 1 a letter will be sent to the complainant covering such issues as the complaint, how it was dealt with, the action taken, and any further steps which then follow including the right of appeal.

### The Procedure You Should Follow

If there is any aspect of college life that you are not satisfied with, you have the right to make a complaint.

#### Step 1

Where the complaint is about an assessment grade, you must follow the assessment appeals procedure for your course. Details of this can be obtained from the examinations officer.

For other problems where you feel you have been treated unfairly you should begin discussing the problem with the member of staff directly. If you feel uncomfortable about doing this then you could seek informal advice from, for example, another member of the course team or your tutor.

Often a simple chat, exchange of views, mutual apology, etc. can solve a problem before it gets too serious.

At this stage, the matter will be dealt with informally, and ideally a mutually agreeable solution found. Nothing need be recorded unless you or the staff member, wish to do so.

Generally problems can be sorted out at this stage but if you are not satisfied by the outcome of Step 1, you should move to Step 2.

## Step 2

If you still have a difficulty, or are not happy with what has been done, you are entitled to take your complaint to the Director of appropriate curriculum for further informal discussion. Once you have discussed it with your Faculty Leader or Head of Community Provision, you are entitled to follow the formal student complaints procedure:

Put the complaint in writing, within four working weeks of when unfairly treated. Explain the reasons and background to your complaint and send it to the Deputy Principal. You should give your name and college roll number so the complaint can be followed up correctly. You should hand in your complaint to Reception and ensure it is addressed to the Deputy Principal (Complaints). A proforma is available with Reception.

The Deputy Principal will decide which Senior Teacher should deal with your complaint. The Senior Teacher dealing with the complaint will contact you, usually within five working days of you handing in the complaint, to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

You will receive a written response from the Senior Teacher, usually within 10 working days of the meeting. The response will explain the findings of the investigation and any action to be taken. If the complaint is found to be unjustified, the reasons will be clearly stated.

If the complaint is about the Principal you should complain to the Deputy Principal who will refer it to the Chair of the Corporation.

Any person against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of the nature of the complaint.

A confidential written record will now be read, signed by you and kept by you and by the Deputy Principal. This will include details of the complaint, and the action taken.

If they are not already aware of the problem, either you or the college may choose to involve your parents (16-19 year old students) at this stage.

## Step 3

If you are dissatisfied with the response you may appeal, in writing within five working days of the Senior Teacher's decision. Your appeal should be handed in to Reception and addressed to the Principal who will review the action and responses so far. You will receive a written response usually within ten working days.

## Final Appeals Procedure

If, after your complaint has reached step 3 and no satisfactory resolution has been reached, you have the right to appeal to the Corporation. This should be done within 10 working days. In the first instance you should write to the Clerk to the Corporation at the College address. The Corporation will set up an Appeals Sub-Committee to look into the Complaint and the college's response to it.

The Appeals Sub-Committee will consider the complaint in a manner that it will determine and give a written decision to all parties which decision shall be final.

## Complaint to the Education Funding Agency

If your complaint has still not reached a satisfactory resolution, you have the right to complain to the Education Funding Agency. A complaint should only be made to the Agency when the College process has been fully exhausted.

The procedure and further details can be found [here](#).

## **JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

1 Belgrave Road,  
Highgate,  
Birmingham  
B12 9FF

T: 0121 446 2200