

Staff Policy

Learner Complaints Policy

Lead Responsible	Vice Principal Curriculum and Learner Experience
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LEARNER COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 At the College we believe in the principle of continuous improvement in the quality of all the services we offer to learners, employers and the wider community. Complaints are a valuable source of feedback which we act upon quickly. We have devised a comprehensive Complaints Procedure to allow college users to express their concerns, and give all college staff an opportunity to learn from complaints.
- 1.2 It is essential that every member of staff follows the Complaints Policy when dealing with complaints. Anyone using the College's services is entitled to make a complaint and to have their concerns dealt with fairly.
- 1.3 The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London is a member of the Capital City College Group. When signing your Learner Agreement / Employer Contract you are agreeing to the Group's policies and procedures which outline what you can expect from us and what we can expect of you. These policies, including the Complaints Policy.
- 1.4 The Complaints Procedure and Complaints Form are also available online at [Myday](#). Copies are also available from the Reception at each Centre.
- 1.5 We aim to provide you with any guidance and support you may need to complete our complaints procedure. If you need any help, please contact the Head of Quality and Compliance.

2.0 Introduction

What is a Complaint? A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of a service or facility provided by the College.

Who can make a Complaint?

- Students / Apprentices who are enrolled on a course/programme/activity at the College. This includes students on Higher Education (HE) courses affiliated to partner universities in the first instance. Once the College Complaints Procedure is completed an HE student may then take their complaint to the partner university if they wish.
- Employers who have employees enrolled on a course/programme/activity at the College.

We would not normally accept a complaint from:

- Ex-students unless the complaint is received by the College within eight weeks of the end date of the course.
- An anonymous source.
- Third parties e.g. parents / guardians or legal representatives.

It is expected that complaints are made promptly and normally within 3 months.

If a complaint is about a member of staff, they will be notified and given the opportunity to respond. In all other respects the College will maintain confidentiality regarding complaints and request that students, apprentices and employers do the same.

The College has the right not to accept complaints (e.g. where a complaint is judged by the College to be frivolous, vexatious or malicious).

Separate procedures exist for the following:

- Academic appeals relating to assessment decisions, covered by the Assessment Appeals Procedure
- Complaints relating to disciplinary processes are covered by the Learning and Behaviour Policy
- Complaints relating to bullying and harassment are covered by the Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Complaints relating to admissions are covered by the Admissions Policy

3.0 Complaints Procedure

Stage 1- Informal Complaints Procedure: You should in the first instance raise any concerns with the teacher or a college manager. The College aims to resolve the issues you raise within 10 working days.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaints Procedure: If your complaint has not been resolved using the informal complaints procedure, or if it is inappropriate to use the informal procedure because the complaint is of a serious nature, you may make a formal complaint. Your complaint may be referred back to the informal complaints procedure if you skipped that stage without due consideration.

How to make a formal complaint: Formal complaints must be made in writing using either a Complaint Form available at reception by email to complaints@conel.ac.uk

Your complaint form or email should include clear detailed reasons for your complaint, an indication of the resolution or outcome you seek, and copies of any documents upon which you wish to rely.

The Head of Quality and Compliance, or their nominee, administers the formal complaints process and will acknowledge, monitor and respond to your complaint.

The College aims to acknowledge, investigate and report on the outcome of your formal complaint and any resulting action within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint. These timescales may be extended by the College in certain circumstances e.g. where the issues raised by a complaint are serious ones or to take account of College holidays.

You can normally expect:

- **Complaint acknowledgement:** Your complaint to be acknowledged by the Head of Quality and Compliance, or his nominee, within 3 working days of receipt.
- **Complaint investigation, outcome and action:** An investigation of your complaint will be undertaken by a College manager and the College aims to complete this stage within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint.
The investigation may involve speaking with relevant individuals and / or looking at relevant documentation. You may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint. You may not bring legal representation with you to this meeting if it is to occur but you may bring a friend, relative or representative from the Student Union

Executive to accompany you. If you have any particular requirements (e.g. English as a second language, a learning difficulty and / or disability) you may bring a second person with you.

- **Complaint response:** The College aims to provide a written response to you from the Head of Quality and Compliance, or his nominee, within 20 working days of receipt of your complaint. If after 10 working days of getting a response you do not request a review, the College will regard your complaint as closed.

Stage 3 - Review of Formal Complaints: The College aims to investigate and resolve all complaints in a fair and reasonable manner. If you are not satisfied with the outcome or any action taken relating to your formal complaint you have the right to request a Review on one or more of the following grounds:

- New material evidence has come to light which was not reasonably available at the time of the complaint investigation
- You believe the outcome of the complaint was manifestly unreasonable &/or any resulting action was disproportionate
- The complaints procedure was not followed.

If you wish to request a Review email within 10 working days of the date of the College's written response to your complaint to: angela.edwards@capitalccg.ac.uk, Director of Performance & Quality at the Capital City College Group.

You must clearly explain the reasons for your request for a Review including the grounds upon which it is based and enclose copies of all the documents you wish to rely upon.

You can normally expect:

- **Complaint acknowledgement:** The Director of Performance & Quality, or her nominee, will acknowledge your review request within 3 working days of receiving it.
- **Complaint review and action:** The Director of Performance & Quality, or her nominee, will consider your request for a Review and determine whether it meets one or more of the grounds stated above.
 - If your request for a Review does not meet one or more of the grounds for review, the complaint outcome will not be reviewed. A Completion of Procedures notification will be sent to you by the Director of Performance & Quality, or her nominee, to close the matter.
 - If the Director of Performance & Quality, or her nominee, determines that your case needs to be reviewed, you will be notified who will lead the Review (reviewing manager) and what the Review will involve, including timelines. This may include speaking with relevant individuals and / or looking at relevant documentation. You may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint. Again, you may not bring legal representation with you to this meeting if it is to occur but you may bring a friend, relative or representative from the Student Union Executive to accompany you. If you have any particular requirements (e.g. English as a second language, a learning difficulty and / or disability) you may bring a second person with you.

- You will receive notification about the Review arrangements or Completion of Procedures within 10 working days of receipt of the Review request.
- **Review outcome:** The outcome of a Review will be either to:
 - Uphold the complaint outcome and/or any action.
 - Substitute an alternative outcome and/or action.

You will be informed of the outcome of the Review normally within 5 working days of it being decided upon by the reviewing manager. The decision of the reviewing manager is final and the College will not consider your complaint further. The Review outcome will be contained in the Completion of Procedures notification.

4.0 External Agencies

Following the conclusion of a Review and the receipt of a Completion of Procedures notification, you may be able to take the matter further with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (www.esfa.gov.uk), or if you are on a Higher Education course, with your College partner University and/or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (<http://www.oiahe.org.uk>).

5.0 Complaint Recording and Reporting

- 5.1 Complaints and responses are recorded by complaint reference number on an electronic database.
- 5.2 All complaints documentation is filed by the Head of Quality and Compliance.
- 5.3 Managers will be asked to forward records of cleared complaints to the Head of Quality and Compliance as soon as the case is closed.
- 5.4 All Complaints records are confidential, but may be read by senior managers for the purposes of quality improvement.
- 5.5 Termly reports on complaints may be made to the Curriculum and Learner Experience Group, by the Head of Quality and Compliance.

6.0 FLOW CHART OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

