



## Customer Complaints Procedure

Ref.  
Effective

General 1.4P  
01/12/08

### AIMS

To deal with all complaints in a fair and consistent manner.

### REASONS FOR THE PROCEDURE

To provide and continue to provide a first class level of customer service.

### OBJECTIVES

- To describe the formal procedure for dealing fairly and consistently with customer complaints;
- To inform customers of the route by which they can express a complaint;
- To inform staff of the complaints procedure so that they know what to do if a customer complaint arises.

### PROCEDURE

**Step 1** First of all the customer should **try to resolve the matter directly** with the member of the College who is responsible or who is involved in the problem.

Note:

- Students who are dissatisfied with the outcomes of internal assessments should refer to the Assessment Policy, not the Complaints Procedure.
- Staff who wish to complain about another member of staff should refer to the Grievance Procedure, not the Complaints Procedure.
- Guidelines for dealing with customer complaints regarding a member of staff are available separately.

**Step 2** If Step 1 did not resolve the problem, the customer should make a **complaint in writing to the Director of Quality** (a [Customer Complaints Form](#) is available).

If a faculty/department receives a formal complaint from a customer, the complaint should be date-stamped before passing immediately to the Director of Quality.

The Director of Quality will log the complaint and acknowledge its receipt within 3 working days of receiving the complaint.

The Director of Quality will pass the complaint, with an investigation form clearly identifying the timescales, to the relevant investigating manager who will conduct a full investigation, i.e.

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|---|--|
| - Director of Employer Services                     | complaints from employers  |
| - Director of Faculty/Dept                          | complaints specific to one faculty/dept  |
| - Vice Principal, Haywards Heath                    | complaints from Haywards Heath customers   |
| - Director with responsibility for Child Protection | cases of allegations of a physical/sexual nature involving students (of any age up and including 25) |
| - College Secretary                                 | cases of alleged criminal activity or complaints about corporate College processes                   |
| - Director of Learner Support Services              | other complaints   |

An independent Director may be asked to conduct the investigation, if appropriate.

Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, the Director of Quality will pass a copy of the complaint to the Employee Relations Manager and will consult with this Manager particularly in relation to identifying the most appropriate investigating manager, who may be an Executive Director. The investigating manager appointed should, in addition to following this procedure, refer to the 'Guidelines for dealing with a complaint regarding a member of staff'.

All investigating managers will, within 10 working days of receiving a complaint, provide the Director of Quality with the results of the investigation and a signed letter of reply for the customer detailing the outcome and actions arising from the investigation.

The Director of Quality will send the signed letter of reply from the investigating manager, to the customer - normally within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint.

The investigating manager will inform the Director of Quality if (s)he is unable to meet the above timescale and the Director of Quality will send a holding reply to the customer.

The Director of Quality will advise the Executive Director and Deputy Principal for Teaching and Learning of any investigations where the Customer Complaints Investigation Form has not been fully completed, or where the complaint is not concluded within the expected timescale.

**Step 3** If the customer is dissatisfied with the response received, the customer may **appeal to the Principal of the College** within 15 working days of the date on the response letter. The appeal should be made in writing, stating the reasons, and **sent to the Director of Quality**.

The customer will be notified in writing of the result of the appeal after all evidence has been reviewed. This will normally be within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

### **If the customer is still unhappy**

In the unlikely event that the matter is still not resolved to the customer's satisfaction, the customer is advised to seek guidance from the Director of Quality regarding any further appeal outside of the College.

The Director of Quality will monitor the progress of the complaint at all times.

The Director of Quality will provide an analysis of the number and nature of the complaints and their outcome to Senior Management.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

[College Charter.](#)

[Employer Charter.](#)

[Assessment Policy.](#)

Customer Complaint Guidelines for dealing with a complaint regarding a member of staff.

### **CONTACTS**

Director of Quality.

Deputy Principal for Teaching & Learning and Quality.

### **WHO SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE**

All customers.

All staff.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Quality is responsible for ensuring that all customer complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently and in accordance with this procedure. The investigating manager is responsible for conducting a full, documented, investigation and providing a written response to the Director of Quality.

## HISTORY

This procedure was reviewed and revised November 2005 and March 2006.  
Procedure reviewed and revised in December 2008.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Sue Dare \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 10 December 2008 \_\_\_\_\_  
Position \_\_\_\_\_ Deputy Principal  
\_\_\_\_\_ for Teaching & Learning and Quality \_\_\_\_\_