

Complaints Procedure - Students

Review Period:	Annual	Date approved:	January 2017
Approved by:	SMT or Designated Person	Date to be reviewed:	January 2018

Introduction

As a student, parent, employer or member of the local community you are entitled to expect action if you are not satisfied with the teaching or any other services provided by the College.

The College takes a positive view of complaints formal or not, recognising that they can provide valuable feedback about weaknesses and enable the College to improve its services. You can be assured that you will not be treated adversely as a result of making a complaint. We undertake to handle any complaint courteously and promptly and to provide an effective response. You may enquire at any time into the progress of the resolution of your complaint.

Definition of a working day: a working day is in line with College Term Dates. The College Calendar is available from our website, www.hpoolsf.ac.uk

What you should do?

If you feel dissatisfied with the College's services please do not hesitate to tell us about it –

we would much prefer a timely warning that you think something is wrong. At as early a stage as possible, speak informally to the person in the College you think is the most appropriate and explain your concern:-

a) College services

- Most grievances can be resolved informally. If you are a student or parent/guardian, talk first to the person you see as being able to deal with the problem. This is likely to be the Subject Tutor for matters relating to study, or the Student Achievement Tutor if the problem is not an academic one.
- If you are an employer where a student has been placed with your organisation you should contact the named placement organisers, in the first instance.
- If the problem cannot be resolved at this level you should approach the Programme Area Manager, who may liaise with the Interim Vice Principal – Curriculum, Quality & Student Support or in their absence, the Director – Student Guidance & Support.
- If there is still no satisfactory outcome, you should speak, or write, to the Interim Vice Principal or in their absence, the Director – Student, Guidance &

Support explaining the problem and why you feel it has not been dealt with satisfactorily. If your concerns have been made in writing, you will receive a written response within ten working days.

- The Interim Vice Principal or in their absence, the Director – Student, Guidance & Support will investigate the matter and agree, with you, a date by which your complaint will receive a formal response.
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome you should speak or write to the Interim Principal explaining the problem and why you feel it has not been dealt with satisfactorily. If your concerns have been made in writing, you will receive a written response within ten working days.
- The Interim Principal will investigate the matter and agree, with you, a date by which your complaint will receive a formal response.
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome, or if your grievance concerns the Interim Principal, you should write to the Chair of the Corporation (Governors) via the Clerk to the Corporation. The Chair will carry out an independent investigation and will respond to your complaint within twenty working days of the acknowledged receipt.
- If you are still not satisfied you have the right to complain to the Local EFA, SFA if you are a student aged 19 or over or direct to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment (address below).

b) Examination Results

If you believe your results are not correct, you should contact the Programme Area Manager concerned and through them, the Examinations Officer. If you wish to request a remark, you must do so through the College and pay a fee, the Examinations Officer will advise. If your result is upgraded, the fee will be refunded. If the result remains unchanged and you wish to pursue an appeal, you may do so, through the College, to the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB), GCSE, AS and A Level only. Appeals may only be made regarding the conduct of the examination or the conduct of the Examination Board.

c) Transport

If you are not satisfied by the free College Transport provided whether it is the shuttle buses to and from the town centre, bus service from Hart, Elwick or Dalton or the Trimdon, Sedgfield or Wynyard Bus, then please contact the College Reception team to let them know. If you have had an issue on a public bus when coming to or from College then please contact the Company providing the service direct.

d) In all other instances, if you are not sure who to speak to -

Ask for the Senior Manager on duty – that will be the Interim Vice Principal or the Director – Student Guidance & Support, or if they are not available, speak with the Principal's Personal Assistant and she will put you in touch with the appropriate person to speak to. Depending on the nature of the problem, most concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily this way immediately or within no more than a few days.

Formal Complaints

Depending on the nature of the problem, most concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily immediately or within no more than a few days. However, if an informal discussion has not resolved your concern to your satisfaction you may want to make a formal complaint. If so, please write to or telephone the Interim Vice Principal or in their absence, the Director – Student Guidance & Support and as far as possible

- Explain the problem
- Mention what previous contacts you have made with the College over the matter
- Say what action you would like taken. If you need help in describing your complaint do ask for help from a friend, or an independent adviser, such as the National Union of Students, or the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

What the College will do with a formal complaint?

The Interim Vice Principal or in their absence, the Director – Student Guidance & Support will deal with the matter directly. Your complaint will then be investigated thoroughly and objectively, which may involve asking you to attend a meeting with College staff.

- You may be accompanied at any meeting by a fellow-student, friend or relative.
- You may ask for particular named individuals to attend as well if you think it will help.

Throughout the investigations, the College will do its best to ensure that you and any others concerned are being dealt with fully and fairly. Personal details will be dealt with in confidence; you may specify who else may have access to the information.

Depending on the nature of the problem you can expect that the College will

- Contact you within 5 working days either giving a response to the complaint itself, or explaining how your complaint is continuing to be dealt with and when you will next be contacted about it.
- If it is not possible to resolve the problem within 15 working days, give you an interim reply.
- Do its best to give you a full response within, at most, 30 working days, or failing that a clear explanation why it has not been possible to do so, together with a date when completion is expected.

In bringing matters to a conclusion, the College will state clearly for you what follow-up action is intended, by whom and when.

If you are still not satisfied with the College's intended course of action

Your next course of redress is through the College Governors. Please contact the Governors in writing addressing your letter to:-

The Chair of the Governing Body
C/o Clerk to the Corporation

At the College, marking the envelope "Private and Confidential".

As far as possible, explain the problem and what the College has proposed to do about it, and say in what way you are not satisfied and what action you wish to see taken.

An appeals committee of the Governing Body will attempt to deal with the matter in the same timescale as outlined above for formal complaints and with the same regard for fairness.

If you are still not satisfied, you have the right to complain to the Local EFA, SFA if you are a student aged 19 or over, or direct to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment (addresses below).

Monitoring Complaints

Complaints are logged by the Interim Vice Principal's Personal Assistant and a summary report of the complaints dealt with in the year are reviewed by the Senior Management Team monthly.

Formal complaints are reported to the Governing Body annually.

Addresses:

- 1 Interim College Principal & Chief Executive**
Maureen Bunter
Hartlepool Sixth Form College
Brinkburn
Hartlepool
TS25 5PF Telephone: 01429 294444
- 2 Interim Vice Principal – Curriculum, Quality & Student Support**
Julie Collings
Address & Telephone as above.
- 3 Director – Student Guidance & Support**
Ben Robinson
Address & Telephone as above.
- 3 The Chairman of the Corporation**
Jonathan Brash
Address & Telephone as above.
- 4 EFA**
Earlsdon Park
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-funding-agency>
- 5 SFA**

Complaints Team,
Skills Funding Agency,
Cheylesmore House,
Quinton Road,
Coventry,
CV1 2WT
Email: complaintsteam@sfa.bis.gov.uk.
- 6 DfE**
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD Telephone: 037 00 2288
<https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe>
- 7 Local Government Ombudsman**
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH Telephone: 030 061 614
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Record of Complaint



Name of Complainant:	
Date Received:	
Name of person dealing with the complaint initially:	
Nature of complaint:	
Action taken:	
Date of action:	
Complaint resolved: Yes / No	
If not resolved complaint passed to:	
Date complaint passed over:	
<p><i>Complaints should be passed to the Interim Vice Principal or Director – Student Guidance & Support.</i></p> <p><i>A written record should be made and appropriate action taken. If the situation is resolved, the details should be passed to the Interim Vice Principal's Personal Assistant who will keep a brief record of each complaint received.</i></p> <p><i>Normal day to day issues should be dealt with by tutors as they arise and are not to be recorded as complaints.</i></p>	