

College Complaints Procedure

September 2014



College Complaints Procedure

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The College Complaints Procedure which should be read in conjunction with the College Complaints Policy sets out the steps which staff should follow when a complaint is received.
- 1.2 These procedures apply to all complaints from enrolled learners and applicants for places, parents/carers, employers and other users of College services and facilities. Any expressed dissatisfaction with College provision, services, procedures or facilities will be treated as a complaint.
- 1.3 The Policy and procedure does not cover complaints about academic assessment i.e. grades and marks which are covered by the Academic Appeals Procedure.
- 1.4 Staff complaints do not form part of this procedure.
- 1.5 Staff cannot make a complaint for a learner or member of the public but should, where appropriate, offer assistance in recording the complaint. Enrolled learners should be referred to their tutor, the College's Student Services Team or Advice Centre, if they require assistance in presenting a complaint.

2 Logging Complaints

- 2.1 In the normal course of events learners and other users of College facilities or services will have queries or concerns and may raise these in the form of a complaint.
- 2.2 If a complaint can be resolved immediately, it is usually unnecessary to log it. It may be appropriate however for the issue to be raised in team meetings or with the line manager if it is clear that it is not simply an individual concern or one-off incident.
- 2.3 If the complaint cannot be resolved informally to the complainant's satisfaction, the formal procedures should be followed.

3 Formal Complaints Procedure

- 3.1 Formal Complaints Received by Telephone or in Person:
 - The complaint should be logged using the College **Complaint Report Form** (Appendix 1)
 - For personal callers, the member of staff receiving the complaint should provide a copy of the College Complaints form. This should be completed by the complainant and the staff member. A copy of the form should be given to the complainant. The complainant's preferred format for response should be noted.
 - The completed form should be sent to the

The College Complaints Officer
South Thames College
Executive Suite
Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PP

e-mail: complaints.officer@south-thames.ac.uk

3.2 Formal Complaints made in writing or by e-mail

Complaints received by a member of staff related to their own area of work should be forwarded to the Head of School or Service Area.

The Head of School/Service Area should:

- Send a copy of the complaint to the College Complaints Officer for logging
- The College Complaints Officer will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days
- The Head of School/Service Area will investigate the complaint then:
 - draft a final written response with the reasons for the response within 20 working days and forward this to the Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality for approval
 - send a copy of the response to the Complaints Officer for the file
 - include details of the appeals procedure with all responses to complaints

3.3 Complaints received by a member of staff about another area should be forwarded to the College Complaints Officer.

3.4 All formal complaints made directly to the Complaints Officer will be dealt with as follows.

The Complaints Officer will:

- log and acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and send a copy of the complaint to the Head of School or Service Area responsible for the service or facility
- maintain a record of the outcome which is reported to the Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality

3.5 The Complaints Officer will follow up all formal complaints when 15 working days have elapsed. This is to ensure that responses are sent within the 20 working days set out in the College Complaints Policy.

4 Appeals Procedure

4.1 Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the way in which the complaint has been dealt with, s/he may appeal by writing to the Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality who will review the investigation and provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days.

4.1 If the appeal is upheld, the College will apologise and make clear the actions taken to address the issue. If the appeal is not upheld, the response will detail the findings of the appeal process.

4.2 Both the appeal and the response will be copied to the Complaints Officer for the file.

5 Final Appeal Procedure

5.1 If the complainant remains dissatisfied s/he can appeal to the Principal by writing to her at the Wandsworth Campus.

5.1 Appeals must be made within one month of receipt of the final written response.

5.2 A written response will be sent within 20 working days.

5.3 The response will provide a written apology and information on how the College will deal with the matter, if the final appeal is upheld.

5.4 All responses will include details of the right to appeal to the Skills Funding Agency [SFA] if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the College's response.

5.5 Both, the final appeal and the response will be copied to the Complaints Officer for filing.

6 Monitoring

6.1 The Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality will provide an annual report to the Governors which includes an analysis of complaints and the action which the college has taken as a result of them.

6.2 The monitoring process will be used to ensure that all complainants are treated fairly and equally. The College will collect and analyse the following information on complainants (where available) to identify differences between groups and to allow issues to be identified and addressed.

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnic origin
- Disability
- Course and mode of study

Produced by:	Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality
Date reviewed:	21 st July 2014
Approved by:	SLT
Date approved:	
Review by:	September 2015

Impact Assessment			
Equality Strand	Carried out by:	Completed [Date]	Comment
Age	G.Walmsley H Drewery A Branscombe S Jones	8 th September 2014	
Disability			
Gender			
Race			

Appendix 1

Complaint Report Form

Phone Call

Personal Caller

Name of person making complaint	Address
Enrolment number [if currently enrolled]	Daytime telephone number
School, course and centre [if currently enrolled]	
Subject of complaint	
Action taken to date	
Signature	
Date	

Return to:
The Complaints Officer
Executive Suite
South Thames College
Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PP
complaints.officer@south-thames.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8918 7480