

Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

(For all provision except Higher Education)

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Compliments, Comments, Complaints Policy and Procedure

Please note a separate procedure is in place specifically for HE students and can be found at the HE policies and procedures page on the College website.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At The City of Liverpool College we are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, providing a high quality service. We welcome any opportunity to review, change and improve our practice. This Policy and Procedure aims to support students, potential students, employers, stakeholders and the general public in communicating with and bringing matters of pleasure, dissatisfaction or concern to the attention of the College.
- 1.2 This document tells you how procedures work so that a person making a comment or complaint gets a response within a reasonable time. If you need help to make a complaint, or you need this document in a different format, please contact either Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk or ask at one of our centre reception desks or Learning Resource Centres (LRC).
- 1.3 This policy will be applied consistently to students, parents/carers, employers, visitors or members of the community regardless of their age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, status and marriage or civil partnership status in respect of unlawful discrimination.
- 1.4 Staff should use the internal grievance procedure for all staff complaints.
- 1.5 The College will respond to any compliment, comment or complaint fairly and promptly:
 - An acknowledgement response will be provided within 2 working days of receipt of the compliment, comment or complaint via email.
 - For complaints, a further, more detailed response will be made within 10 working days.
 - A meeting will be offered between the parties involved if appropriate.
 - An appeal may be made to the Director of Learning (or an equivalent member of the Senior Management Team if appropriate) if a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a response.
 - Following an appeal, information on how to take the complaint further (e.g. to the Education and Skills Funding Agency or Liverpool City Region Combined Authority) will be provided if requested.
- 1.6 For ease, the remainder of this document refers to complaints, but is equally appropriate for comments and compliments

2. Scope:

- 2.1 The complaints policy and procedure is for all people served by the college which includes students, apprentices, parents, stakeholders, employers, contractors, visitors and others.
- 2.2 The policy does not replace College policy and procedures for academic appeals or disciplinary action; these procedures should be applied where appropriate.

3. Informal Complaints

- 3.1 Day-to day issues will be resolved promptly and informally between a student and their subject/course tutor or progress leader.
- 3.2 Members of staff must take every opportunity to resolve a complaint informally.
- 3.3a If you are a student and cannot or do not want to talk to the person directly concerned, you can:
 - Talk to your progress leader, assessor or reviewer.
 - Discuss the matter with your student representative who can accompany you to a meeting with the person concerned.
 - If the complaint is made about a member of staff and you would like to be accompanied when this meeting takes place, you can ask at Advice and Guidance or the Student Union for someone to come with you. They will support you in getting your points across as clearly as possible and help where possible to enable you and the person concerned to resolve the problem informally.
 - If the issue cannot easily be resolved the complaint should be directed to the relevant Head of School.
- 3.3b If you are an employer and cannot or do not want to talk to the person directly concerned, you can:
 - Contact the Head of School for Apprenticeships and Partnerships.
 - Email Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk to arrange an informal meeting or telephone conversation with an appropriate manager.
- 3.4 Verbal complaints made to Reception, staff in public areas and/or requests to meet the Principal will be referred to the relevant Head of School for the area in which the complaint is about or, if they are unavailable, the duty manager.
- 3.5 If a complaint is resolved at this stage, it will be recorded in the School's informal complaints log with documentation retained for two years. Where the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at this level, all documentation and notes will be forwarded to Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk to be logged and responded to as a formal complaint.

4. Formal complaint

- 4.1 If you are unable to resolve an issue informally, you can make a formal complaint. The complaint must be about something which has happened within the last twelve months.
- 4.2 Formal complaints can be made in the following ways:
- By telephone to the College helpline on 0151 252 3000. The operator will direct you to where a complaint form can be accessed or may take down some details and send them on your behalf to Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk
 - By email – Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk
 - In writing by completing the Complaints form which is available on the Student Intranet or College Website, handing the form to a centre reception, LRC, Head of School or Progress Leader.
- 4.3 If you would like help in completing the form ask any member of staff in Advice and Guidance or an LRC who will be happy to support you.
- 4.4 Following a formal complaint:
- You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt with a reference number within 2 working days.
 - An appropriate member of the Wider Leadership team will be nominated as the investigating officer, this will usually be the Head of School for the relevant curriculum area.
 - The investigating officer will respond to your complaint in writing or by email no later than 10 working days during term time – this may take longer over the 'college holidays' due to staff availability.
- 4.5 You will, in most cases, be able to withdraw your complaint at any point, but if your complaint is serious, the investigating officer may have to complete an investigation even if you wish to withdraw your complaint.
- 4.6 On completion of an investigation the investigating officer may:
- Propose an amicable resolution.
 - Uphold or partially uphold the complaint, offer an apology and take appropriate steps to address the issue.
 - Dismiss the complaint as unfounded, providing reasons.

4.7 A complaint against the Principal, the Board or an individual Governor:

Complaints against the **Principal, The Board** or an individual **Governor** should be addressed to The Clerk to the Board of Governors, The City of Liverpool College, The Learning Exchange, Roscoe Street, Liverpool, L1 9DW.

Complaints against **The Clerk to the Board** should be addressed to The Chair of the Board of Governors, c/o The Principal, The City of Liverpool College, The Learning Exchange Roscoe Street, Liverpool L1 9DW.

5. Appeal Procedure

- 5.1 If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you can appeal. Appeal forms are available from Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk, the student intranet or the College Website under policies and procedures.
- 5.2 An appeal will only be considered if the complaint has initially been considered at the formal stage.
- 5.3 An appeal will:
 - Review the procedures followed at the formal complaint stage.
 - Consider whether the complaint outcome and investigating officer response was appropriate.
 - Consider new information and material evidence which was unavailable or not considered at the formal complaint stage.
- 5.4 We aim to respond to complaint appeals within 10 working days. Occasionally, an appeal investigation may extend beyond 10 days due to the nature of the complaint and/or the information required to fully investigate the complaint. In these cases, the complainant will be informed of the timescales involved and, if appropriate, may receive intermediary information regarding progress of the complaint appeal.
- 5.5 If you do not feel that your complaint has been resolved following appeal you have exhausted the college's complaints procedure and should request information on how to contact the relevant external body to further your complaint.
- 5.6 The relevant external body will usually be confirmed as either:
 - The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
 - The Education and Skills Funding Agency

6. Recording and Monitoring

- 6.1 All informal complaints are logged by the relevant Head of School with records held securely for 2 years.
- 6.2 All formal complaints are logged and recorded. A regular review is undertaken by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Strategy Group to identify any element of potential or actual discrimination.
- 6.3 The Strategic Leadership Team review formal complaints and complaint appeals on a termly basis.

7. Monitoring and Quality Assurance and Improvement

- 7.1 All staff have a responsibility for receiving complaints and treating them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure above. Staff are expected to provide assistance to support a complainant where necessary.
- 7.2 Managers and investigating officers must provide written details of the action taken and the outcome of the complaint and forward this with any supporting documentation attached to the Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk mailbox ensuring the complaint reference number is included.
- 7.3 Senior managers/investigating officers for complaint appeals must provide written details of the action taken and the outcome of the appeal and forward this with any supporting documentation attached to the Complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk mailbox ensuring the reference number has been included.
- 7.4 The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the operation of the procedure to ensure that it is effective.
- 7.5 The Complaints Department is responsible for providing periodic analysis reports to the Strategic Leadership Team.
- 7.6 The Governing body will receive an overview of complaints and appeals on an annual basis.
- 7.7 The Board of Governors is responsible for over-seeing the complaints policy and procedures and may become involved if a complaint is received regarding the Principal, The Clerk or any member of the Board.
- 7.8 Location and Access to this policy:

- Student Intranet/Information/Policies and Procedures.
- Staff intranet - Quality SharePoint Site.
- Liv-coll.ac.uk/The College/Policies and Procedures.
- If you require an alternative format please contact complaints@liv-coll.ac.uk or speak to a member of staff in a centre reception or LRC.