



# Complaints

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Policy & Procedure 2025-26

Principal and CEO

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## **1. Policy**

- 1.1 At City of Wolverhampton College, we are committed to providing high quality services for all our stakeholders and visitors.
- 1.2 The policy covers complaints about services the College provides, and the treatment received whilst at the College.
- 1.3 Overall responsibility lies with an assigned member of the Executive Team.
- 1.4 Quality are responsible for the management of the processes of timely investigation and communication to complainants. Quality will monitor and track intervention, whilst maintaining accurate records.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 To explain the processes for raising, investigating, and concluding raised complaints.

## **3. Scope**

- 3.1 The procedure applies to complainants. A complainant is a stakeholder (a current or prospective student or apprentice, a parent/carer or an employer) or a visitor that indicates dissatisfaction with the current level of service.
- 3.2 It does not cover complaints about student or apprentice assessments e.g., grades and marks. Complainants wishing to make a complaint re outcomes should fully exhaust the College's Assessment Appeals Procedure before instigating this policy and procedure.

## **4. Procedure**

### **4.1 Raising a complaint**

- 4.1.1 If a student or apprentice has a concern or complaint, it should initially be raised with a member of staff. Staff are expected to make every effort to resolve the issue informally at this stage. A record of any discussions and actions taken should be maintained, as this information may be required if the matter progresses to a formal complaint.
- 4.1.2 If an informal resolution cannot be achieved, the student or apprentice must submit a formal complaint in writing. This should include as much detail as possible and must clearly state the complainant's full name and contact information.
- 4.1.3 A formal complaint must be submitted within the same academic year in which the issue occurred. The College is unable to investigate complaints raised outside of this timeframe. In such cases, the complainant will be informed accordingly, and the complaints process will be considered concluded.

#### 4.1.4 Submitting a formal complaint can take the guise of various methods:

- a) A 'Have Your Say' form can be submitted via the [website](#).
- b) A hard copy of the 'Have Your Say' form can be completed and scanned to [complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk)
- c) A letter or a 'Have Your Say' form can be posted to one of the College campuses.
- d) A letter or a 'Have Your Say' form handed to a member of staff who will pass on to Quality.
- e) A letter or email sent directly to [complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk)

4.1.5 If a student or apprentice needs help in presenting a complaint, advice can be sought from a member of staff. If completed on behalf of the complainant, additional information may be required.

4.1.6 If the complainant communicates by telephone, a member of staff can record the details on behalf of the complainant. This should then be forwarded to Quality or scanned to [complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk)

#### 4.2 Investigating a complaint

4.2.1 Upon receiving a formal complaint, an acknowledgment will be sent. At this point, an Investigation Lead will be assigned. The Quality team may contact the complainant to request or provide additional information.

4.2.2 The Quality team will work with the Investigation Lead to examine the concerns raised. Wherever possible, the Investigation Lead will be independent of the area involved in the complaint. However, in certain cases, a manager from the relevant area may be appointed due to their subject matter expertise.

4.2.3 The Investigation Lead will aim to complete the investigation within ten working days. If the complaint is complex or external factors cause delays, this timeframe may be extended, and the complainant will be informed accordingly.

4.2.4 The Quality team will monitor the progress of the investigation throughout the process.

4.2.5 In exceptional circumstances - such as during a pandemic or outside of term time - procedures may be adapted to reflect operational constraints.

#### 4.3 Complaint outcomes

4.3.1 Following the investigation outcome, a response will be formed by the Investigating Officer and communicated to the assigned Executive Member responsible for complaints. Written findings will be formed and sent.

4.3.2 In the event of a complaint being raised relating to a course deemed as Higher Education (HE) or Level 4 and above, under the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Scheme Rules, the College in its final response will incorporate in the response the Completion of Procedures Letter. The Completion of Procedures Letter serves four main purposes:

1. It fixes the date when the student completes the provider's internal complaints procedures.

2. It clarifies the issues considered by the provider under those procedures.
3. It establishes the timescale for bringing a complaint to the OIA.
4. It advises the student of the possibility of bringing a complaint to the OIA.

4.3.3 The College will ensure that students and apprentices will not be treated less favorably following a complaint.

4.3.4 All formal complaints are recorded on a central tracking system.

#### 4.4 Appeals

4.4.1 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal within five working days from the date of the response.

4.4.2 Appeals must be submitted through formal communication, clearly stating the reasons for requesting a review. Channels to submit an appeal can include:

- a) A letter posted to Quality at one of the College campuses.
- b) A letter handed to a member of staff who will pass on to Quality.
- c) An email sent to [complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@wolvcoll.ac.uk)

4.4.3 Appeals will be reviewed by a member of the Executive Management Team (EMT) or Senior Management Team (SMT) who has had no prior involvement in the original complaint. A formal response will be provided within ten working days from the date the appeal is received.

4.4.4 For appeals related to Higher Education (HE), the College will include a Completion of Procedures Letter in its response, in accordance with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Scheme Rules.

4.4.5 The outcome of the appeal marks the conclusion of the College's internal complaints process.

4.4.6 All appeals are logged and tracked through a central monitoring system.

#### 4.5 Malicious, abusive or persistent complaints

4.5.1 City of Wolverhampton College does not tolerate malicious complaints in any form. Appropriate action will be taken in response to complaints that are knowingly false or include inappropriate language or behaviour.

4.5.2 A complainant who continues to contact the College with unreasonable demands following the conclusion of an investigation may be classified as an unreasonable or persistent complainant.

4.5.3 Unreasonable demands may include excessive requests to have complaint explored outside of timeframes, requests for information, frequent or disruptive contact, unrealistic expectations, or repeated attempts to reopen resolved issues.

4.5.4 If a complainant is deemed to be acting unreasonably, the designated Executive Member responsible for complaints will determine the most appropriate course of action. This may include notifying the complainant that no further investigations will be undertaken.

- 4.5.5 Individuals previously identified as having displayed unreasonable behaviour retain the right to submit new complaints in the future, provided they do so within the established timeframes and follow the College's complaints procedure.

## **5. Monitoring & Evaluation**

- 5.1 An annual analysis is produced, alongside regular in-year reports, detailing the nature of complaints received and identifying actions taken to support continuous improvement.

**Appendix 1 - Complaint Process Flowchart**