

## **Complaints and Compliments Policy**

### **Purpose**

Inspire Education Group (IEG) strives to meet and exceed customer expectations and seeks to continually improve the quality of its services. IEG recognises that complaints and compliments provide an opportunity to improve the quality of service or facilities that it provides and to celebrate what is going well. It is also considered important that complaints and compliments are recorded and that complaints are dealt with as close as possible to the point at which they arise. Similarly, that praise and positive comments are welcomed.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all complaints whether they are made orally or in writing, which call into question any aspect of the service, provision, or performance in a manner, which suggests that standards have not been met. The only exception is where a student is on a course of study at University Centre Peterborough which has a separate policy. All students should be made aware of how to raise concerns and compliments during Induction into college life.

This procedure also applies to Apprentices/Employers and to the quality of the provision, any element of the apprentice/employer journey.

Some complaints, if made by staff, may be recognised as a Grievance and in these instances staff members will be referred to the Grievance Procedure.

### **The Policy Statement**

IEG is committed to listening to comments and complaints regarding the quality of our students' experience.

We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction with our service, no matter how expressed and whether justified or not, that requires a response or further action on the part of our Group.

IEG will show this commitment by ensuring our complaints and compliments process is:

- Easy to access and understand, clear and simple to use. Complaints and compliments can be made:
  - Verbally to a member of staff in person or by telephone
  - In writing by letter or email
  - Using the Complaints form on the website or student hub

**Policy Name:** CG007 Complaints and Compliments Policy

**Policy Author:** Assistant Principal Quality

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- Prompt, with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of progress, especially if an investigation takes longer than expected
- Fair, with an opportunity for a full and impartial investigation. All concerns raised will be taken seriously and investigated with an open mind, avoiding any bias in favour or any party. Those who make a complaint can be assured that they will not be subjected to discrimination or retaliation as a result of complaining
- Communicated to all students during Induction into college life
- Reviewed on an annual basis by the Group Governors

In the event that a complaint concerns the well-being or safeguarding of a student, the Group has a duty to report this to the Local Authority, and any action taken will be in accordance with the Group's Safeguarding for All Policy.

Complaints received anonymously may not be accepted as it would impede the investigation and communication of the outcome.

## **Responsibilities**

A complaint may be brought to the attention of any member of staff, and it is the responsibility of that person to ensure that appropriate action is taken in line with the procedures in Appendix 2.

- The Quality Officer will record and monitor progress dealing with all complaints and compliments
- The Investigating Officer is responsible for presenting the findings to the Assistant Principal, Quality
- The Assistant Principal, Quality is responsible for appointing an Investigating Officer or resolving the issue with the complainant directly. Where an Investigating Officer is appointed responsible for making a decision on the basis of the outcome of the investigation, identifying any points for corrective action and informing the complainant. In appropriate cases, where an investigation finds that a member of staff has failed to carry out proper procedures or has not acted with integrity or competence, notifying Human Resources and the individual's line manager
- The Director of Governance is responsible for investigating any complaints against the Principal of either College

## **Related Procedures and Documentation**

Appendix 1 - [A Guide to the Complaints Process](#)

Appendix 2 - Complaints Procedure

Appendix 3 - Complaints and Compliments Process Flowchart

HR001 - Whistleblowing Policy

An Equal Opportunities Impact Assessment was carried out by the Policy Approval Group on 11 November 2021.

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## Complaints

If you have a complaint that we have been unable to resolve informally, please use this form, a photocopy of it or the electronic form to provide the necessary information. Alternatively, email your concerns to:

[complaints@peterborough.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@peterborough.ac.uk) / [complaints@stamford.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@stamford.ac.uk)

This will then enable us to carry out a full investigation on your behalf which may result in potentially improving our processes and procedures for the future. The Colleges take all complaints very seriously and so we ask you to provide us with as much information as you can and if possible, provide us with copies of any documentary evidence you may have which relates to your complaint. When you have completed the form, please seal it in an envelope and either post it to your College, or hand it in to a member of staff on reception.

Date .....

Name .....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Contact Telephone number .....

Please state course if appropriate .....

Parent / Student / Employer / Carer / Other\* (\*Please circle applicable)

Nature of complaint (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signed .....



## Complaints

### “An Opportunity for Improvement”

A guide to the our Complaints Procedure

Peterborough College  
Park Crescent  
Peterborough  
PE1 4DZ  
Tel: 0345 872 8722  
[complaints@peterborough.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@peterborough.ac.uk)

Stamford College  
Drift Road  
Stamford  
PE9 1XA  
Tel: 01780 484300  
[complaints@stamford.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@stamford.ac.uk)

## **A Guide to the Colleges' Complaints Procedure**

The purpose of this document is to describe the way in which complaints are handled.

### **Introduction**

The Colleges welcome feedback from all students, apprentices and employers at any time so we are able to identify problems and improve the quality of service we provide. The aim of our procedure is to ensure a speedy resolution to the problem raised and where necessary, make changes for the benefit of all our students.

To help you resolve any difficulties you may have concerning your course, college facilities or college administration, a simple three step process is used.

### **What should I do if I am dissatisfied?**

**Step 1** – Initially, you should try to resolve the problem informally with the person/Faculty/Department concerned. Tell the person about the issue you are unhappy about. Give them as much detail as possible.

**Step 2** – If you are not comfortable speaking to the person concerned or, after following step 1 of the procedure, you are still dissatisfied then you can make a complaint.

### **Step 3 – Complaints Procedure**

Your complaint can be made by:

- Letter addressed to the Assistant Principal Quality at the College concerned
- Email to the complaints email address at your College [complaints@peterborough.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@peterborough.ac.uk) [complaints@stamford.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@stamford.ac.uk)

- Phone (ask for the Quality Officer who will record the details of your complaint for you)
- Using the electronic form on your College website [here](#)
- Completing the form at the end of this leaflet

If you require help in completing the form, please contact our reception staff who will arrange for a member of staff to listen to your concerns and put them in writing on your behalf.

When we receive your complaint, you will receive an acknowledgement letter (within 3 working days) indicating who will be investigating your complaint and a date by which you may expect a formal response from the Assistant Principal, Quality. This will be no more than 15 working days from the date of receipt of your complaint.

The response from the Assistant Principal, Quality will provide a detailed breakdown for each point raised and will explain the reason for the point being upheld or rejected and what changes, if any, are to be made.

### **Note**

We understand that in some circumstances it may not be possible for you to follow these steps in the order given and if necessary, you may start the process directly at step 3.

## **Complaints and Compliments Policy- Appendix 2 Procedure**

### **Compliments**

Any compliments received should be forwarded to the Assistant Principal Quality to record and to share best practice at Curriculum Performance Reviews and to report an anonymised summary to the Group Governors.

### **Complaints**

On receipt, each complaint will be allocated a reference number and logged on the complaints register. Complainants should be sent an acknowledgement within 3 working days of receipt of a complaint.

A complaint may be brought to the attention of any member of staff. As a minimum the member of staff receiving the complaint should attempt to resolve the situation, if it falls within their sphere of influence or responsibility. If the complaint cannot be resolved it should be referred to Assistant Principal, Quality who will either appoint an investigating officer or resolve the issue with the complainant directly.

Complaints investigations should be completed within 15 working days or as soon as possible thereafter, from receipt of the complaint. If it will not be possible to respond within 15 working days the complainant will be advised of the reason and kept informed

At the conclusion of the investigation the Investigating Officer will present the findings to the Assistant Principal, Quality. The Assistant Principal, Quality will make a decision on the basis of the outcome of the investigation, identify any points for corrective action and inform the complainant.

The Assistant Principal, Quality will deal with the outcome of the complaint and draw to the attention of the appropriate Manager any recommended corrective action arising.

The response to the complainant will:

- Address all of the points raised
- Provide reasons for the decision reached
- Explain the next steps available if still dissatisfied

Where the complaint is upheld an apology will be offered and corrective action taken.

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## **Complaints against a member of staff**

In the event of a complaint being made against a member of staff, or if during an investigation it is found that a member of staff may have failed to carry out proper procedures or has not acted with integrity or competence the line manager should be informed and the procedure below followed.

If the complaint refers to a matter of procedure or failing to meet standards, the line manager should deal with it through normal performance management processes. If it is determined that staff disciplinary or capability proceedings are required to resolve an issue, the complainant will only be informed that action is being taken. The complainant will not be entitled to participate, and the details of the proceedings will remain confidential to the Principal/Vice Principal and/or the individual's line manager. If the member of staff is involved in apprenticeship delivery, the Executive Director Business Development and the Group Director for Employer Services will be informed.

If the complaint is a potential case of misconduct or gross misconduct, the Assistant Principal, Quality will refer this to Human Resources and the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality. An appropriate investigating officer will be appointed who will present the findings to the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality.

Complaints against the Principal should be referred to the Director of Governance.

## **Appeals**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of an investigation they can appeal the decision. Appeals should be addressed to the Assistant Principal Quality and set out why the original investigation has not resolved the query. Appeals will be investigated by a member of the Executive Team. As with the original complaint the aim is to conclude appeal investigations within 15 working days.

The Investigating Officer will review all the available evidence and investigation and the original response but may also make further enquiries.

The Investigating Officer will respond to the complaints with the outcome of their review.

If the complainant still remains dissatisfied they can take their complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA will only investigate if a complaint has first been investigated as an Appeal by the Group and within 12 months after the issue arose.

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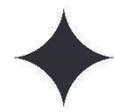
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### Complaints & Compliments Policy – Process Flowchart

