

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Complaints Procedure enables stakeholders who have concerns and/or complaints to have them addressed in the interests of continually improving the service we offer. Through the Complaints Procedure, the College seeks to provide an accessible, fair and straightforward system which enables individuals to raise concerns and which ensures an effective, timely and appropriate response.
- 1.2 This procedure can be used by all stakeholders of the College who may be students, employers, sponsors, partner organisations, neighbours, visitors and any other members of the community served by the College.
- 1.3 Compliments let the college know when stakeholders are happy with a College service and tell us when something is working well. The good practice can then be shared with other college services.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1 The Quality Office is responsible for the administration and overall control of the complaints procedure.
- 2.2 It is the College's policy to respond formally to all complaints and the service standard is to respond within 10 working days. Any person asked to investigate a complaint is responsible for taking prompt action to do so in accordance with the service standard of 10 working days for response.

3. Procedure

3.1 Receipt & Recording

- 3.1.1 Complaints may be made in a variety of ways (e.g. telephone, letter, visit, e-mail).
- 3.1.2 All complaints will be formally recorded. The person receiving the complaint must record the following details:
 - Name (person & organisation if appropriate)
 - Address
 - Telephone number
 - Campus attended (if relevant)
 - Course attended (if relevant)
 - Details of complaint
 - Any action/outcome requested
 - Complaint title
- 3.1.3 Alternatively, if the complainant wishes to complete the complaint detail themselves they may be given a complaint registration form for the purpose.
- 3.1.4 Either the complainant or the member of staff taking the complaint down should sign the complaint registration form (if appropriate)
- 3.1.5 The completed complaint registration form, with any relevant documentation, should be forwarded to the Quality Office.

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3.2 Registration

- 3.2.1 All complaints will be logged by the Quality Office on ServiceDesk Quality.
- 3.2.2 The Quality Office will enter summary details on ServiceDesk and the complaint will be allocated a reference number. The Quality Office will classify the complaint for reporting purposes.
- 3.2.2 The Quality Office will determine who should be assigned the responsibility to investigate/resolve the complaint (usually the appropriate Director of Curriculum) and record this on ServiceDesk.
- 3.2.4 The Quality Office will send an acknowledgement letter or email to the complainant within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint, enclosing or attaching a copy of the complaints procedure as outlined in Policy 46a: Information for Oaklands College Complainants.
- 3.2.5 On the same day as the acknowledgement is sent, the Quality Office will send an e-mail (via ServiceDesk Quality) to the senior manager who is to carry out the investigation and respond to the complainant. Complaints referring to a staff member or members will be copied to HR.

3.3 Investigation & Resolution

- 3.3.1 The Director of Curriculum will either personally investigate the complaint or assign the investigation to the relevant Head of Department. The Director of Curriculum must co-ordinate the investigation including responding to the complainant, with the aim of closing the complaint within 10 working days. If it is apparent that this will not be possible the Director of Curriculum must inform the complainant and the Quality Office of the expected timescale, within the 10 working days.
- 3.3.2 If the complaint is about a member or members of staff, the investigating manager will need to liaise with HR to ensure that the correct investigation methodology is followed.
- 3.3.3 The Director of Curriculum/assigned Head of Department will carry out an investigation of the issues raised in the complaint and:
 - Record findings (if the complaint is about a member of staff the correct investigation report template should be used).
 - Agree action to be taken (NB: The Director of Curriculum is also responsible for ensuring implementation of the action plan and confirming this with the Quality Office when completed)
 - Draft a written response to the complainant (summarising resolution and closure of complaint) and send via email to Head of Quality (or nominee) for approval prior to sending out.
- 3.3.4 The Head of Quality will approve the response, after discussion with the investigating manager if required. The Director of Curriculum will then:
 - Forward approved response to the complainant
 - Copy the final response to the Quality Office
 - Where complaints refer to a staff member, send a copy of the response and all investigation documentation to HR
 - Confirm with the Quality Office the closure of the complaint.
- 3.3.5 If the investigation identifies that actions are required to rectify the issues raised in the complaint, the Director of Curriculum will:
 - Manage, monitor and close necessary action
 - Confirm completion of the action to the complainant and copy in/inform the Quality Office
 - If outcome potentially requires Disciplinary action, HR will take this process forward.

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3.4 Referral and review

3.4.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response or action taken, the complainant must provide the Quality Office with the reasons for this. The Quality Office will then refer the complaint to the Principal for consideration. The Principal will consider the details within the complaint file and, if necessary, investigate further before writing to the complainant with a final outcome within 10 working days of receiving the request for review.

3.4.2 If the complainant is still not satisfied they can then refer their complaint to either:

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)- you should contact the ESFA if your complaint refers to any aspect of your education at Oaklands College other than higher education (HE)

[Complaints about post 16 education and training funded by ESFA](#)

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) – you should contact the OIA if your complaint refers to any aspect of higher education (HE) at Oaklands College.

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/complaints-about-our-service.aspx>

The OIA run an independent scheme to review student complaints. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right at [https:// www.oiahe.org.uk/students](https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students). The College will issue you with [a Completion of Procedures letter](#) to confirm that you have completed the College's internal processes to support you with your complaint to the OIA.

OFSTED- you should contact the Complaints, Investigation and Enforcement team at OFSTED if you are a residential student at Oaklands College.

Telephone- 01633 657393

Email- CIE@ofsted.gov.uk

Pearson Higher Education Higher Nationals (HNs) - you should contact Pearson if your complaint refers to an academic matter relating to Pearson Higher Nationals.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us/feedback-and-complaints.html#>

Please note If you're unhappy with the way the College is delivering a Pearson qualification, or with a decision that's been made, Pearson advise that you give your learning provider the opportunity to investigate and respond to your concerns before getting in touch with them.

3.5 Management Review

3.5.1 The Quality Office will produce a monthly summary report for SMT review.

3.5.2 The College is committed to learning from complaints to improve the quality of College services.

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