

Complaints Policy

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West Herts College Group

1. Why you should tell us if something has gone wrong....

- 1.1 The West Herts College Group is committed to the continuous improvement of its services and to monitoring the standard of its provision. The College therefore, welcomes and encourages comments, observations and feedback about the quality of services from students; parents/carers; employers; visitors and all other members of the community.
- 1.2 The College will treat all complaints seriously, fairly, efficiently and deal with them positively and with respect.
- 1.3 We would also like to hear from you if you have any other comments or compliments about a service you have been provided. This information can also be shared through the formal comments system, or through many of the other feedback mechanisms available to students at the College.'

2. When should you tell us if something has gone wrong....

- 2.1 You should try to tell us what is wrong as soon as possible so that the College can look into the matter and investigate at the time.
- 2.2 In the first instance if possible you should talk to your teacher or tutor about your concerns. Many problems are resolved informally by talking to members of staff about the issue that you have raised. If they are unable to resolve the issue or you would prefer to talk to someone else you can approach your Head of School, student support or the Quality team. If you feel at any point your concerns are not being addressed, you can make a formal complaint using the process outlined in point 3.
- 2.3 While the College will deal with all complaints it may be more difficult to reach a suitable outcome if complaints are not received in a timely manner.

3. What to do if you want to tell us about something that has gone wrong....

- 3.1 If you wish to make a formal complaint you should complete the Complaints Form (**Appendix A**) and return it to the College's Quality team. Alternatively, you can complain by other methods of communication on an agreed basis e.g. telephone; in person, email, via the College website.
- 3.2 If you need help to make a complaint, members of staff working in the College's Student Services team will be pleased to help you. You can speak to them by telephone, email or in person.
- 3.3 On receipt of a complaint, the Quality team will:
 - Acknowledge your complaint by the most appropriate method of communication (e.g. email; telephone; in person)

- Refer the complaint to the most appropriate senior manager in order to resolve the complaint promptly and efficiently
- The senior manager will provide a response confirming the actions taken in writing, or by other agreed methods of communications (e.g. email; telephone; in person) within 10 working days
- Where complex matters require detailed investigation which may extend beyond 10 days you will be kept updated on the progress and status of your complaint

4. What to do if you are not happy with the actions taken following your complaint....

- 4.1** If you are not satisfied with the actions taken following your complaint, you have the right to appeal to the Principal. You must appeal within 15 days of receiving notification of the actions taken in response to your complaint, clearly specifying your reasons for appeal. Appeals should be made in writing, or via other methods of agreed communications (e.g. email; telephone; in person)
- 4.2** Upon receipt of an Appeal the Principal will respond within 10 working days in writing, or via other methods of agreed communications (e.g. email; telephone; in person)
- 4.3** The decision of the Principal is final.
- 4.4** If you have fully exhausted the College's complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you can appeal to the other external organisations e.g. awarding body, ESFA, Office of the Independent Adjudicator. (* Please see additional Higher Education guidance*)
- 4.5** If you require support to contact external agencies, members of staff working in the College's Student Services team will be pleased to help you.

* The Office of the Independent Adjudicator will normally need a Completion of Procedures Letter, which the provider, WHCG, will send you once you have completed its complaints or appeals procedures. This letter, usually labelled as a Completion of Procedures Letter, will set out the issues that have been considered, the provider's final decision and the deadline for bringing a complaint to the OIA. In exceptional circumstances, the OIA may look at a complaint where the internal complaints or appeals procedures have not been completed. *

OIA Student pages: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/>

**Specific Higher Education, Awarding Body appeals and complaints processes can be found in the academic appeals policy **

5. What records will the College keep....

- 5.1** All records of complaints are kept confidentially for a minimum of three years.
- 5.2** The Deputy Principal will ensure that a summary confirming the nature of complaints is reported to members of the College's Corporation.
- 5.3** The College will treat each complaint separately and will not re-visit complaints which have been closed to the satisfaction of the complainant and the College.

6. How will the College monitor complaints....

The College is committed to ensuring improved access to all customers. To that end, the College monitor complaints in terms of race, gender and disability. In addition, to extend meaningful analysis to other groups of people, the College actively promotes and encourages a culture of disclosure.

7. How will the College make improvements following your complaint....

7.1 The College will provide training and development or adapt working practices, as appropriate, in order to learn from complaints and to improve the quality of College services.

Date of Issue	Authorised by	Review Date
August 2019	College Leadership Group	September 2021

Contact us

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