

NEWHAM COLLEGE LONDON

Complaints, Suggestions & Compliments Policy and Procedures

Policy	
Policy owner:	Principal/CEO
Policy Author	Victoria Campbell-Irvine, Director of Teaching and Learning
Review date (annual review)	August 2026
Applies to:	All college staff, subcontractors and across all premises
Monitoring and evaluation:	Reporting to CLT (Corporate Leadership Team) and annual report on number, nature, and outcomes of complaints & compliments to Executive/Governors.

Associated documents/policies for this area:

- College Mission & Values
- Student Charter and Behaviour for Learning and Fitness to Study Policies
- Student Handbook
- Associated Quality policies including Assessment, Appeals and Malpractice
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policies

	Purpose and Scope
Principles	<p>This policy has been developed to ensure complaints, compliments, and suggestions are listened to and dealt with in a timely, sensitive, and appropriate manner. There are 3 strands of complaints, compliments, and suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formal complaints from learners ▪ Formal complaints from partners, employers, employees, previous employees, visitors, and members of the public ▪ Compliments & suggestions from all <p>Informal complaints should be resolved locally in the first instance. Options to make complaints are through forms at reception, Student Service and LRCs. Forms are also available online and can be emailed or handed in to the Learning Resources Centre or reception.</p>

Resolution of Informal Complaints	<p>Before sending a formal written complaint, learners are encouraged to discuss issues with their teacher/trainer. Any staff member receiving a verbal complaint should try to resolve this informally and/or with reference to the relevant manager. This informal resolution should be outlined in the Student Handbook. Learner Voice may also record suggestions, complaints, or compliments.</p>
Formal Complaint Stage 1	<p>If concerns or complaints are not resolved informally, the complainant is asked to email or complete a written form or email of formal complaint. Learners can ask a friend or family member or Course Learner representative to help them fill in this form, but this should be made clear that they have had assistance for recording purposes. This form will be logged, allocated to the Head of Faculty, and monitored for resolution by the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team to ensure compliance of resolution quickly. If the concern relates to a Head of Faculty, it will be escalated to the Director. If the complaint concerns a director, it will be escalated to Deputy Principal.</p> <p>On receipt of a formal complaint, there will be an automatic response if emailed in and the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team will identify the appropriate manager to investigate and inform the complainant about the action being taken within 3 working days of receipt in writing.</p> <p>All complaints, whether formal or informal, will be recognised and dealt with sympathetically and constructively. Confidentiality will be always maintained within the Teaching, Learning and Improvement team and the appointed manager. No complainant will be disadvantaged, discriminated against or victimised because of making a complaint.</p> <p>An outcome of the investigation and any resolution to the complaint should be sent in writing to the complainant within 18 working days of receipt of the original written complaint and the complaints inbox must be copied into all correspondence, so that the Director of Teaching and Learning can update the Complaints Tracker (held in the Quality Drive) appropriately.</p> <p>All formal complaints at stage 1 are aimed to be resolved within a maximum of 20 working days. Anonymous complaints will be recorded, but not investigated unless they are considered “high-risk” complaints in line with definitions under Whistleblowing or Safeguarding. Investigations are carried out with consideration of all relevant legislation, including the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022, which protects workers who disclose wrongdoing in their workplace from dismissal, penalisation or other sanctions. Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy for further details.</p> <p>If the complaint is concerning a disability-related issue, the investigating manager may refer the matter to an external consultancy to ascertain the reasonableness of the complaint. This may extend the duration of the investigation. The complaint must be thoroughly and objectively investigated within the shortest period to determine if the complaint is well-founded and, if so, to work towards a mutually acceptable resolution.</p>

Outcomes from investigations of complaints	<p>Outcomes:</p> <p>Serious failing Fundamental failure of service delivery with a serious detrimental effect to complainant. Complaints can be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and will include a written apology from senior manager. Case brought to attention of Vice Principal for the Quality of Education included in local curriculum/support area QIP as necessary</p> <p>Medium failing Systems are being applied, but service delivery is uninformed or fails to meet college expectations. Complaint can be resolved amicably and written apology to complainant by investigating manager. Relevant section includes review of performance at team level meetings</p> <p>Minor failing Concerns and issues which cause irritation and frustration to the complainant. Normally resolved amicably and accompanied by a written apology and a note to the relevant section to improve service.</p> <p>Unfounded No valid reason for complaint or beyond college control. Letter from investigating manager to complainant outlines reason for judgement and includes reference to appeals procedure.</p>
Formal Complaint Stage 2	<p>If a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the matter should be referred to the Director of Teaching and Learning who will then pursue the investigation by referral to a more senior manager and request that they pursue the matter and attempt to reach a satisfactory conclusion.</p> <p>Copies of all documentation are then sent to the appointed senior manager and the complainant informed of developments. Potentially vexatious complaints can be dismissed at this stage by the appointed member of the CLT. Stage 2 complaints are aimed to be completed in 28 working days.</p>
Appeals	Appeals against stage 2 can be directed to the Director for Teaching and Learning.
Final Appeals	If the complainant is not satisfied by stage 2 or an appeal to the Director of Teaching and Learning, final appeals to the Principal must be made in writing within 7 days to resolve the complaint. Once again records of complaints and the process will be monitored by the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team.
Complaints about Senior Managers	Complaints about members of the College Leadership Team will be referred to a member of the Executive. Complaints about members of the Executive, Principal /CEO will be passed to the Governors for investigation and resolution.
Nonresolution/ Escalation for GLA funded adult	Adult learners that are funded via the Greater London Authority have the option of escalating complaints directly to the GLA. if the College Complaints procedure is exhausted the GLA adult complainants can refer the complaint to GLA directly at skillscomplaints@london.gov.uk

learners	
Compliments or suggestions	These will be recorded on the tracking system for notes and reference by the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team and will be shared with relevant staff and management.
Responsibilities	<p>The Teaching, Learning and Improvement team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log, register and monitor the formal complaint process at all stages <p>The investigating delegated Manager for Stage 1 will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team and investigate complaint in line with stage 1 Conduct the investigation and respond in writing to the complainant Copy in the complaint's inbox to all correspondence Complete the formal investigation and written outcome within the 20-working daytime limit allocated for stage 1 <p>The Appeal managers at Stage 2/3 will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the complainant of an appeal hearing Meet and attempt to resolve the complaint Write to the complainant and Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team with the final decision of the appeal and decide to uphold or reject the complaint <p>Copies of documentation relating to the complaint must be kept on file for 3 years.</p>
Equality & Diversity	Forms can be made available in large print on request or assistance. Student services can offer support on how to complete the form complaint, suggestion or compliments form. For monitoring and reporting purposes learner demographics will be recorded on the Quality Team tracking system.
Staff communication, training and CPD	<p>A copy of the policy is available to all staff on the intranet. During new staff inductions, staff will be shown the policies and are required to sign that they have been read and understood.</p> <p>Staff are made aware that should they require clarity or further training regarding complaints, they may speak with the Teaching, Learning and Improvement Team who are able to advise and/or provide bespoke training.</p>

APPENDIX:
Complaints Flowchart:

