

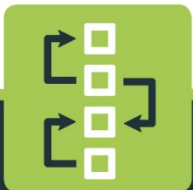
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For the future you want

3Cs College Policy

Compliments, Cause for Consideration and Complaints



Curriculum Planning &
Performance

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 3Cs reflects our commitment to valuing all feedback. It seeks to highlight positive recognition of staff, resolve customer dissatisfaction as close as possible to the point of service delivery and to conduct thorough, impartial and fair investigations of customer complaints so that, where appropriate, we can make evidence-based decisions on the facts of the case.
- 1.2 We recognise that all feedback is valuable information we can use to improve customer satisfaction, make improvements to our services and boost staff morale. The 3Cs procedure will enable us to address a customer's dissatisfaction quickly, meaning they are less likely to escalate to a stage 2 complaint.
- 1.3 The complaints policy has been developed in conjunction with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) guidance on a model complaints handling procedure to ensure that the College complies with a standard approach to handling complaints across the college sector.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy covers all aspects of College management, learning and teaching and corporate services.
- 2.2 Students and members of the public may use this procedure.
- 2.3 The exceptions are:
 - a routine first-time request for a service
 - a request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
 - a disagreement with academic judgement
 - a claim for compensation against the College
 - issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal
 - disagreement with a decision where a right of appeal exists, for example the academic appeals process

- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information Acts
- an attempt to have us reopen or reconsider a complaint we have concluded or given our final decision on.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The College has renamed the Stage 1 complaint to a cause for consideration, the purpose of the cause for consideration is to make certain that staff are aware of any issues of concern at the earliest possible stage and to find a resolution/action plan quickly without the need to open a full investigation. Where it is not possible to resolve a cause for consideration it will be escalated to a Stage 2 complaint and investigation.
- 3.2 The timescales applied will be five working days for a cause for consideration and 20 working days for Stage 2 complaints. Extension to the timeline will only occur when there are clear and justifiable reasons for doing so.
- 3.3 All causes for consideration and Stage 2 complaints will be logged so that the College can monitor trends, learn from and identify necessary quality improvements. Implementation of remedial action to address complaints will be monitored. Compliments will also be logged to show where we are exceeding.
- 3.4 All Stage 2 investigations must be recorded on a complaint investigation plan by the investigating officer to enable the Complaints Handling Coordinator to draft a satisfactory response to the complainant.
- 3.5 All responses to Stage 2 complaints will be signed off by the Vice Principal.
- 3.6 A report on all causes for consideration and Stage 2 complaints received, and the outcomes, will be presented to Senior Management quarterly and the College's Board of Management yearly.
- 3.7 There will be no internal appeal against the outcome of a Stage 2 complaint. Any appeals against how a Stage 2 complaint was handled will be directed to the SPSO or if appropriate the SQA.

- 3.8 All causes for consideration and complaints received on behalf of another will require a Data Subject Authorisation form to be completed and returned to the Complaints Handling Coordinator to allow any information pertaining to the cause for consideration/complaint to be released to the nominated individual/organisation.
- 3.9 Appropriate training will be provided to staff on how to compile an appropriate investigation.

4. LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1 The Executive team and Senior Management team has responsibility to ensure compliance with the policy and procedures.
- 4.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee has the responsibility to ensure it monitors the frequency and outcomes of causes of consideration and complaints to ensure the College has taken appropriate corrective actions as part of any resolution.
- 4.3 All causes for consideration and complaints will be received by the Complaints Handling Coordinator who will ensure they are sent to the correct staff to action. The Complaints Handling Coordinator will ensure that all causes for consideration and complaints are dealt with efficiently and responses sent within the set timescales.

5. SPECIFIC POLICIES/RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 3Cs Process Staff Guidelines.
- 5.2 The Further Education Model Complaints Handling Procedure (SPSO).

6. DIRECTLY RELATED LEGISLATION

6.1 The Scottish Public Services Ombudsmen Act

2002: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/11/contents>

Also related (although not directly) – information law, especially General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

7.1 This policy becomes effective from January 2019 and supersedes all previous policies and procedures relating to complaints handling.

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Jon Buglass, Assistant Principal

Date: / /