09/10 Edition

New College Comments and Complaints Procedure

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

At New College we are always keen to receive your comments, both positive and constructively critical. It is important for us to know when we get things right and when there is a need for improvement.

All courses and services at The College are reviewed regularly and your comments will help the teams and managers' to prepare and, when necessary, redesign or change the provision.

Your feedback is central to this process of continual quality improvement. We want to hear from you if you if you feel we have done something well or alternatively if you think we have not met the standards set out in our College Customer Charter.

It is our commitment to listen and to react to the views of all users of the College and its services.

AIMS

This policy is designed to provide guidance to any student, visitor or other parties such as parents or employers who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the College.

Our aim is to respond quickly and positively and to reach an outcome that is satisfactory and fair for all concerned. We also aim to keep you informed of our progress in dealing with the complaint and the personnel involved.

The purpose of the complaints procedure is to provide an opportunity for complaints to be resolved as quickly as possible by carefully logging and analysing complaints to provide a means of identifying problems and potential faults in the services provided by the College.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Quality Manager is responsible for monitoring complaints to look for trends and patterns. The Quality Manager will present an annual report to the Senior Management Team on the nature of the complaints received and the manner and speed with which they have been resolved. The Director of Customer Services and Quality will report on complaints annually to the Governors who represent the interests of the local community and the public in general.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility is a two way process and if you are a student and you are making a complaint about your course you also have respsonsibilities. We will expect you to have complied with the College ABC standards of:-

- A = Attendance
- B = Behaviour
- C = Commitment to work (meeting deadlines etc)

PROCEDURE

Our comments and complaints procedure is designed to help customers register their concerns and to help the College respond effectively. Complaints are dealt with in two stages:-

1. The informal stage – by talking to us.
2. The formal stage – by putting the complaint in writing.

HOW YOU CAN COMPLAIN?

If you are not satisfied with the service you receive you can:-

- In the first instance speak to your Subject or Personal Tutor or the Curriculum Manager
- Feedback via student questionnaires, focus groups etc
- Talk to the Student/Staff Sabbatical Officer
- Ask to speak to the Quality Manager
- Complete a College feedback card (available in all reception areas)
- Write to the Director of Customer Services and Quality (email: quality@newcollege.ac.uk)

Where a complaint is upheld complainants can expect the College to take positive action to put things right and make every effort to prevent the same thing from happening again.

Once a complaint has been received the College endeavours to acknowledge receipt of that complaint within 3 working days.

The College will appoint an appropriate Manager to conduct an investigation. The Manager will contact the complainant to discuss the situation and negotiate an acceptable solution.

If you need help in making a complaint then you can ask for someone from Student Services to assist you.

The College will assure that your complaint is dealt with impartially and confidentially.

OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION

On completion of the investigation the complaint will be classified in one of three ways:-

- **Upheld** – the complaint was fully justified and will result in the College taking corrective action e.g. an amendment of management/service procedures, staff training, improved communications.
- **Partially Upheld** – certain aspects of the complaint were considered justified and will result in the college conducting some follow action.
- **Not upheld** – the complaint was not justified.

CONCLUDING ACTION

On completion of the investigation the investigating Manager will:-

1. Ensure the Quality Manager is in possession of all necessary information and paperwork to officially record and log the process.
2. Inform any members of staff who have been involved in the complaint of the outcome and any follow up action.
3. Make sure the complainant has been fully briefed about the outcome.

APPEALS

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint you can appeal in writing to the Principal.

A further investigation will be undertaken to try to reach a solution acceptable to both the complainant and the College.

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of the second investigation you can contact:-

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Bora Building, Westlea Campus, Swindon SN5 7EZ
The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ

TIME PERIODS

The time periods as set out in this procedure are for guidance and under some circumstances may be subject to extension. Where any such extensions are made the complainant will be notified in writing.

NEW COLLEGE REFERENCES:-

- College Charter (available in all Reception areas and on the College website: www.newcollege.ac.uk).
- College Feedback Card (available in all Reception areas).